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#2

I HEART SKULL CRUSHER!



I HEART SKULL-CRUSHER!

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I COMMENCE
THIS FIRST MEETING OF
TRINI'S SCREAMING
PAIN BALL TEAM-A-
PALOOZA!

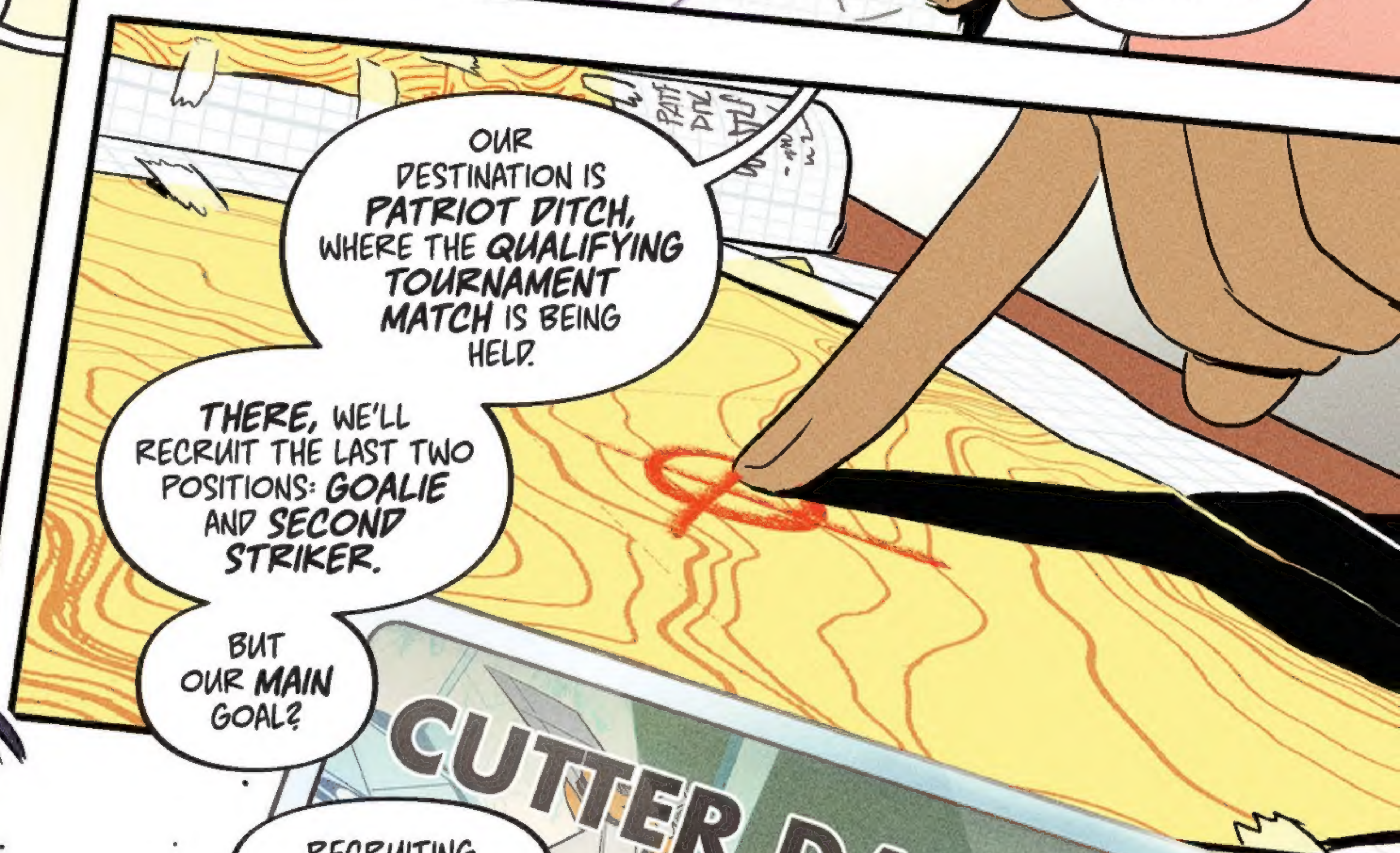
WE'RE
NOT CALLING
OURSELVES
THAT.

UNTIE
ME!



I'VE ASSIGNED
US **ROLES**. YOU
TWO ARE DEFENSE.
I'M **FORWARD
STRIKER**. COACH
IS COACH.

LET ME
GOOOO!



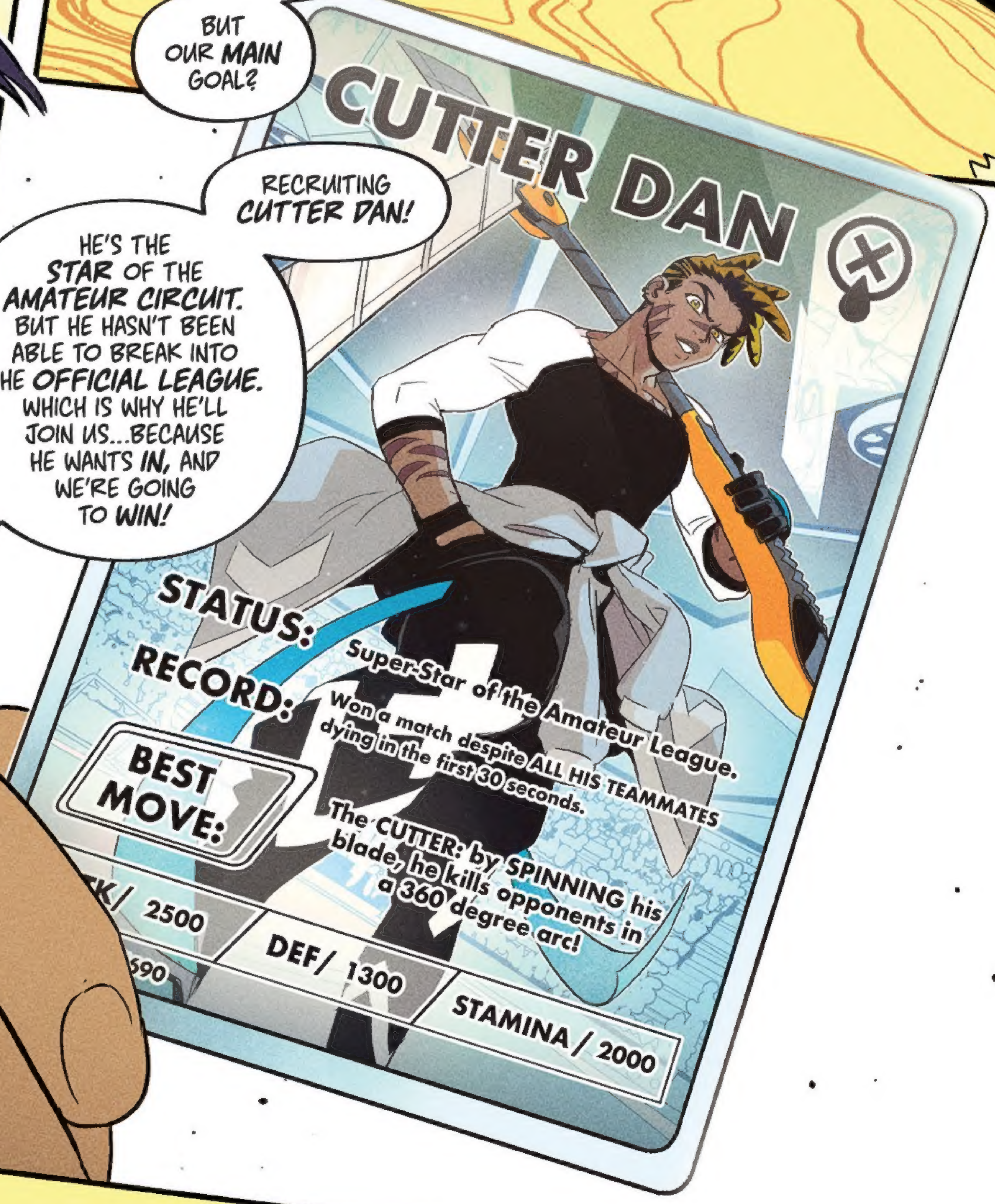
OUR
DESTINATION IS
PATRIOT DITCH,
WHERE THE **QUALIFYING
TOURNAMENT
MATCH** IS BEING
HELD.

THERE, WE'LL
RECRUIT THE LAST TWO
POSITIONS: **GOALIE**
AND **SECOND
STRIKER**.

BUT
OUR MAIN
GOAL?

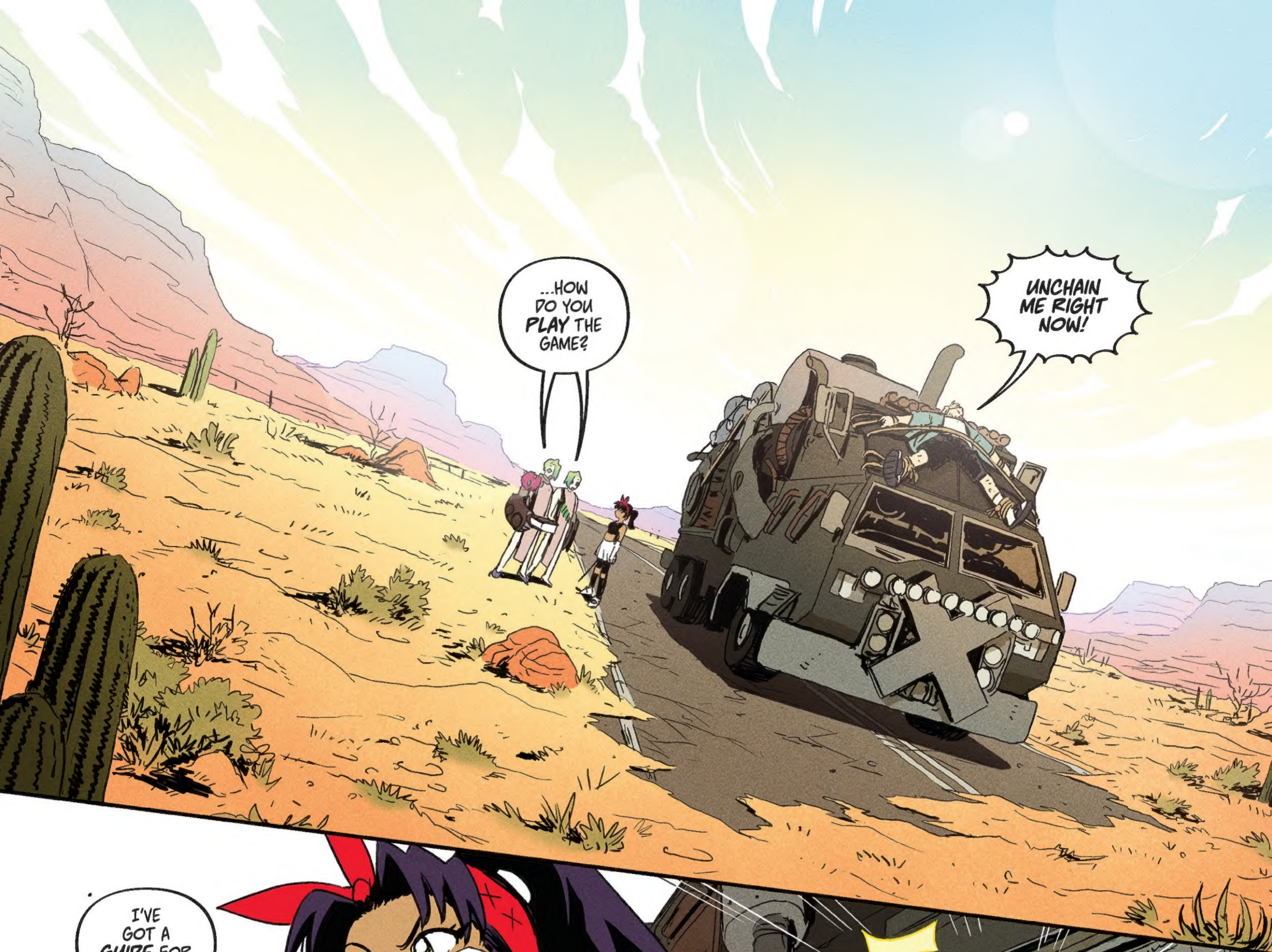
HE'S THE
STAR OF THE
AMATEUR CIRCUIT.
BUT HE HASN'T BEEN
ABLE TO BREAK INTO
THE **OFFICIAL LEAGUE**.
WHICH IS WHY HE'LL
JOIN US...BECAUSE
HE WANTS IN, AND
WE'RE GOING
TO WIN!

RECRUITING
CUTTER DAN!



I'VE COMPILED ALL
RELEVANT INFO INTO THESE
GUIDEBOOKS. ANY
QUESTIONS?

YEAH...



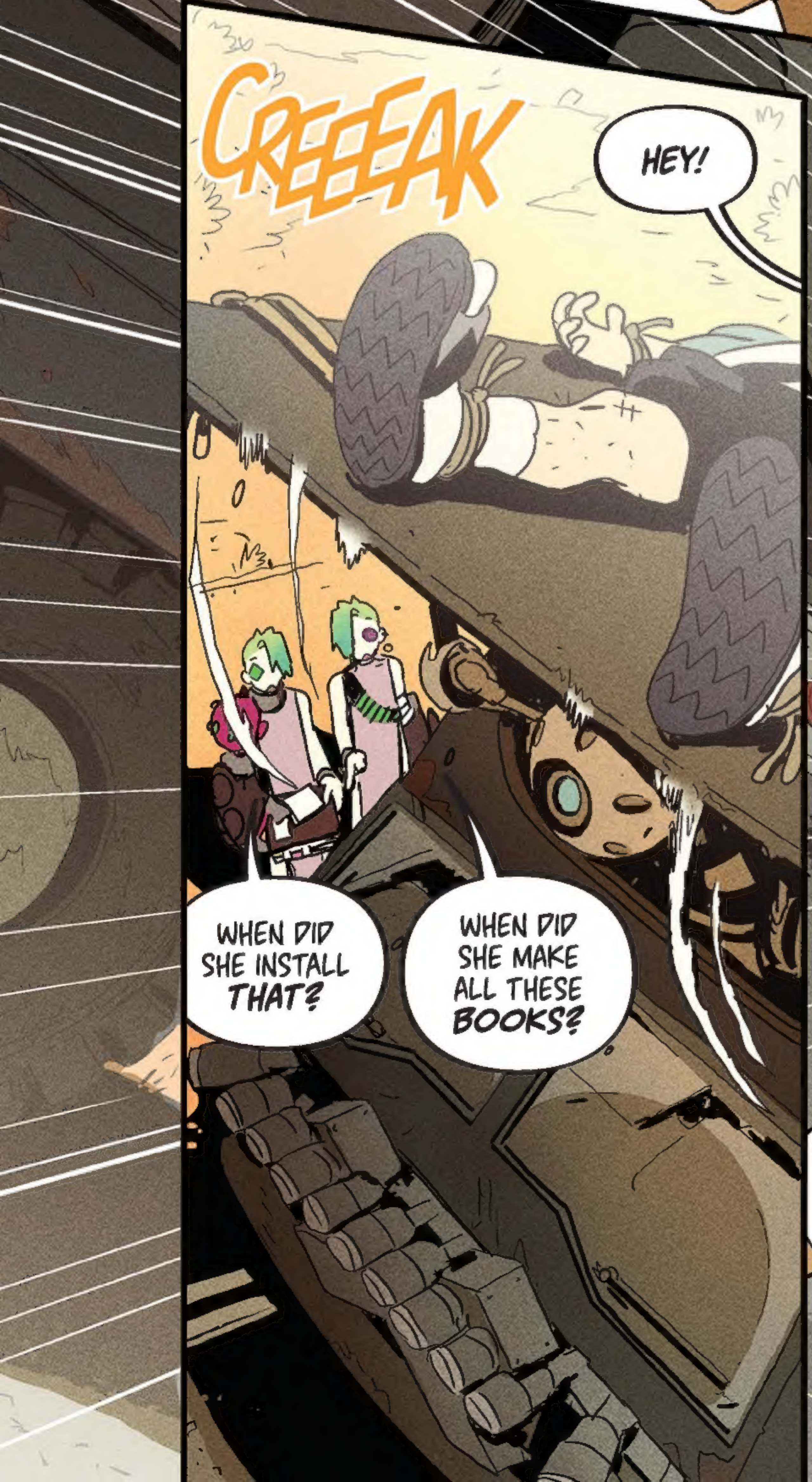
...HOW
DO YOU
PLAY THE
GAME?

UNCHAIN
ME RIGHT
NOW!



I'VE
GOT A
GUIDE FOR
THAT!

THUMP



CREEEAK

HEY!

I HATE
THIS, FOR THE
RECORD!

THE RULES
ARE **SIMPLE**: USING
ONLY YOUR LOWER
BODY, MOVE THE BALL
FROM YOUR SIDE INTO
THE **GOAL** ON YOUR
OPPONENTS'
SIDE.

WHEN DID
SHE INSTALL
THAT?

WHEN DID
SHE MAKE
ALL THESE
BOOKS?



EVERY PLAYER
IS **ARMED**. EVERY
GOAL IS LOCATED
INSIDE THE **GOALIE
SQUARE.**

THE GOALIES
CAN'T LEAVE THE
SQUARE, BUT THEY
CAN MURDER
ANYONE WHO
ENTERS!

GETTING THE BALL INTO THE GOALIE SQUARE WITHOUT DYING EARNS YOU **THREE POINTS**. GETTING IT **THROUGH** THE GOAL GETS YOU **FIVE**.

MURDER AN OPPOSING PLAYER WITH THE BALL, YOU GET **ONE POINT**.

POINTS SYSTEM

SO MURDER EVERYONE. EASY.

NO!

+2 BUT NOT FOR YOU

"IF YOU MURDER A PLAYER WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE BALL, THE OTHER TEAM GETS TWO POINTS!"

"AND MURDERING ISN'T ENOUGH! YOU NEED STRATEGY."

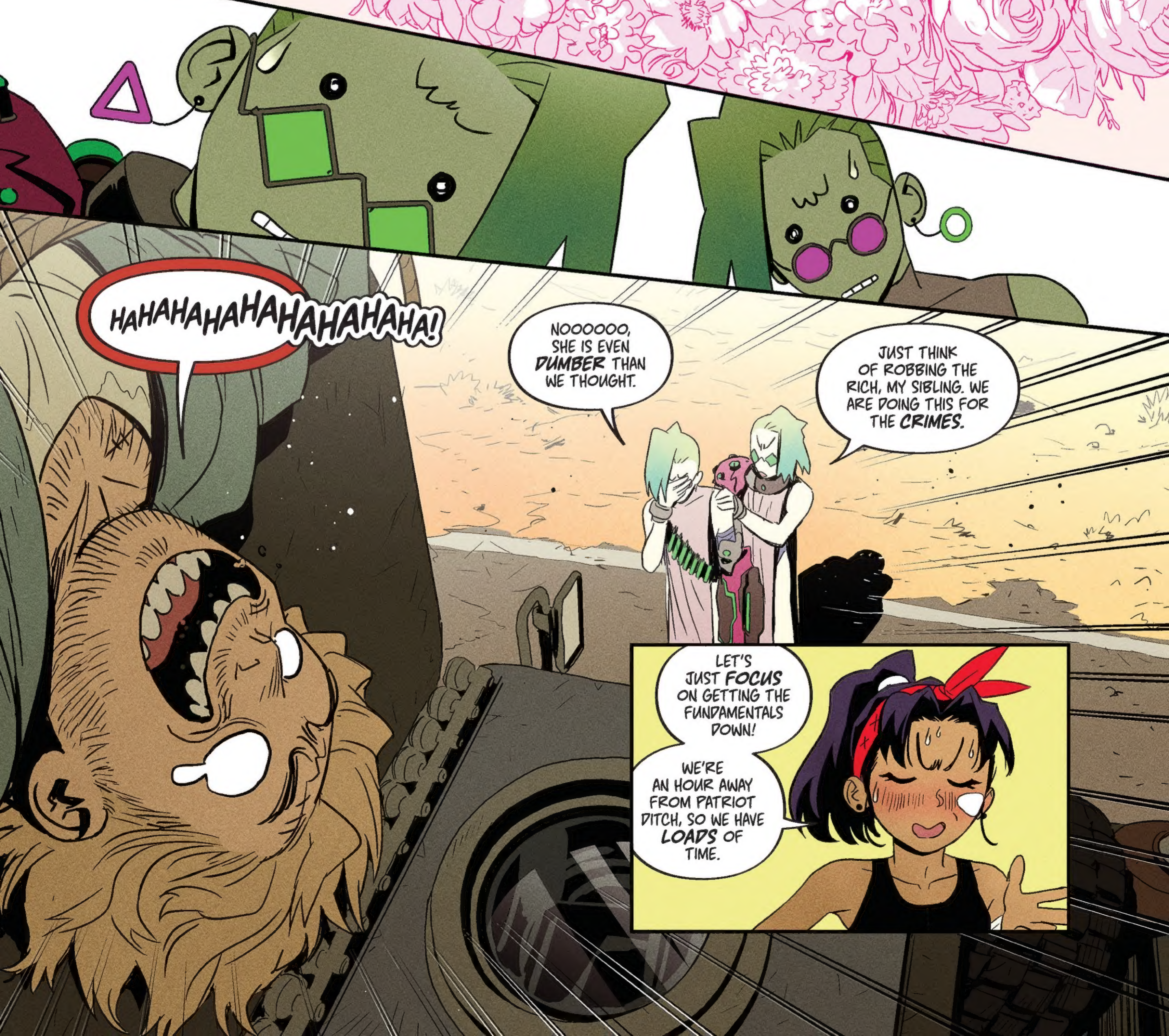
IF THE OTHER TEAM GETS INTO YOUR GOAL SQUARE MORE THAN ONCE, THEY'LL HAVE THE MOST POINTS!

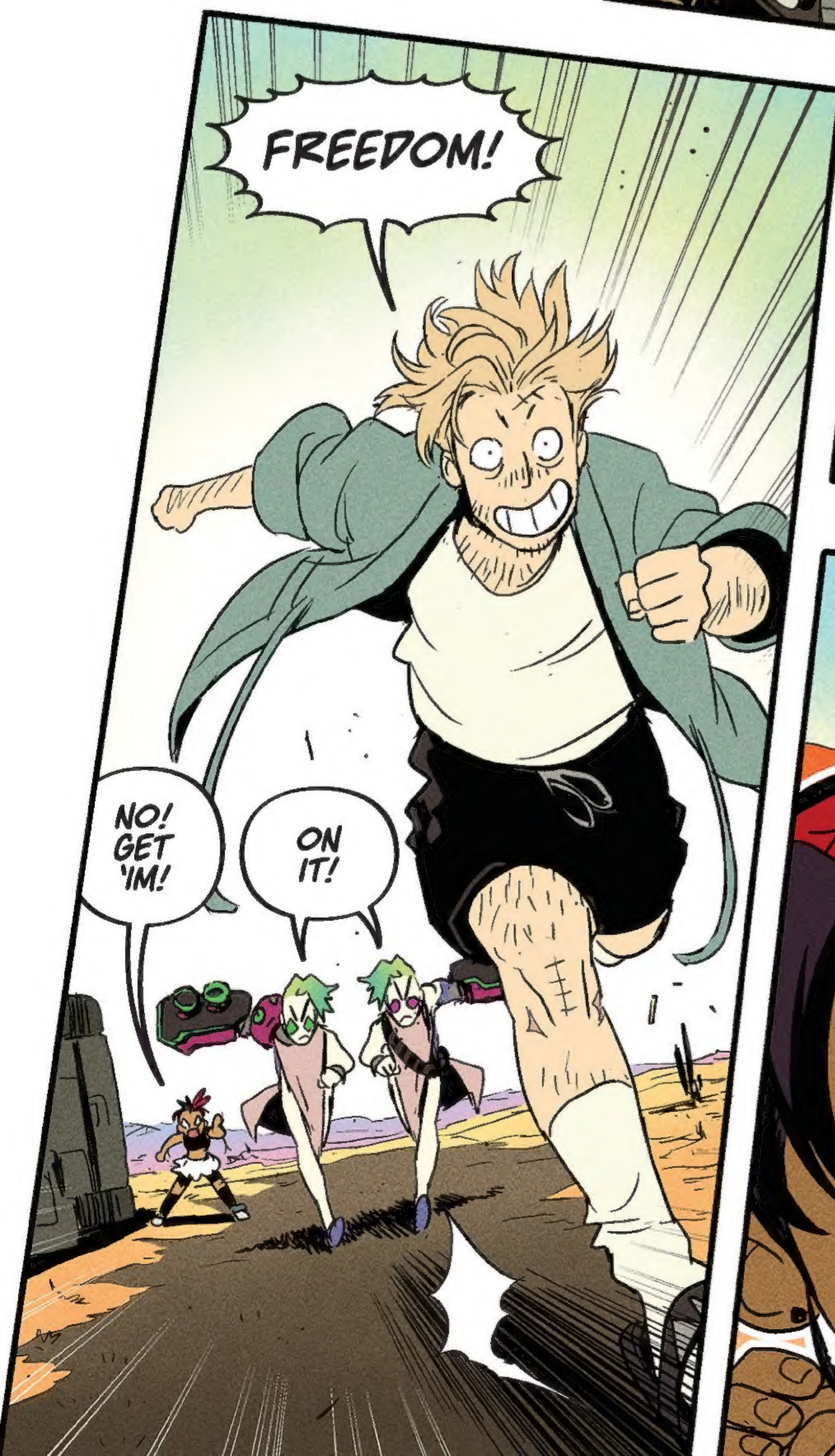
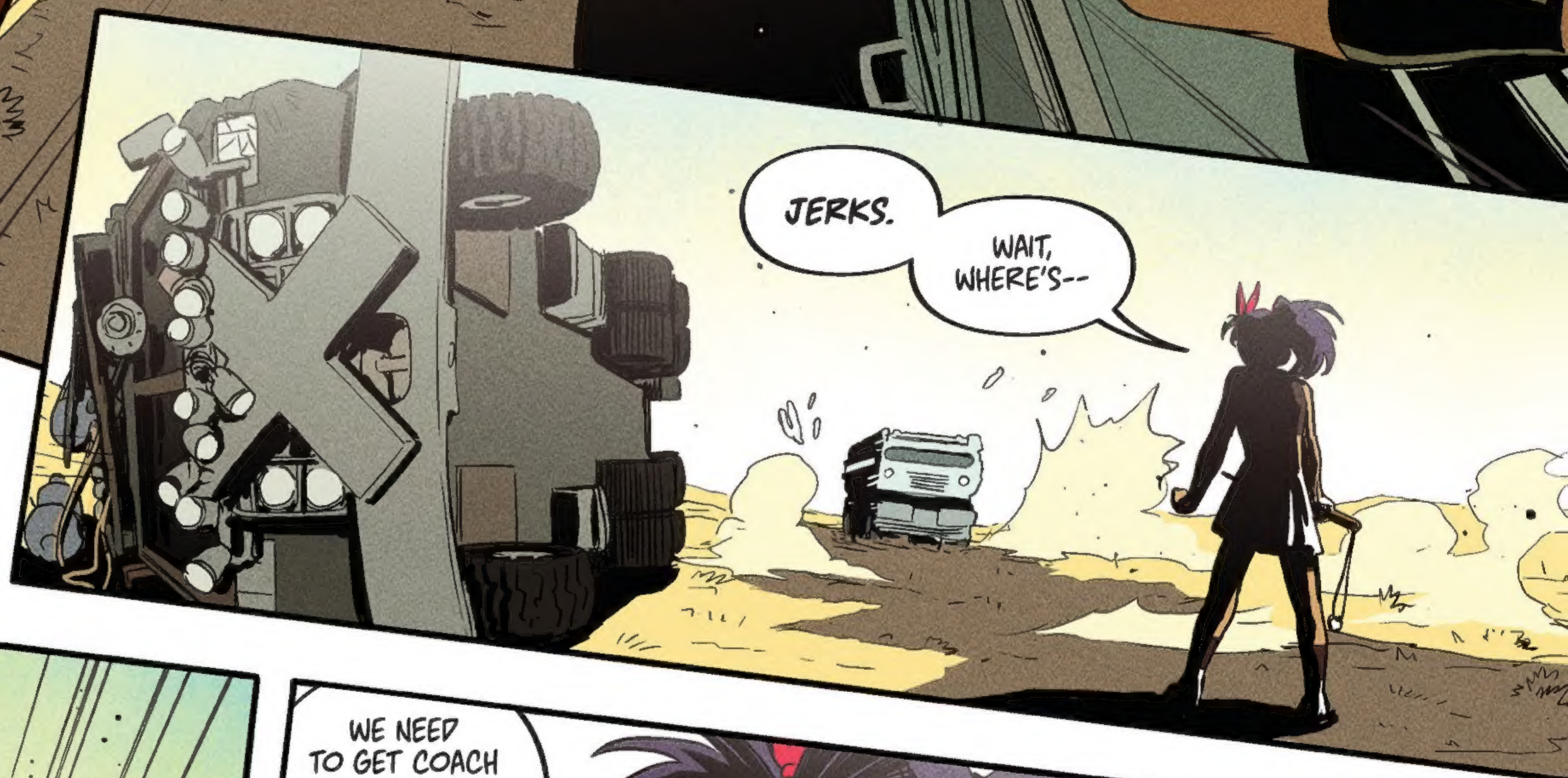
AND THEY COUNT **SEVERED HEADS** BOUNCING INTO THE SQUARE! BUT SOMETIMES IT IS GOOD TO TAKE THE TWO-POINT MURDER PENALTY, BECAUSE IF THEY HAVE A GREAT DEFENSE IT'S WORTH IT TO TAKE THEM OUT.

ALSO THE SECOND HALF OF THE GAME USUALLY CONTAINS THE **TYRANT'S SURPRISE**, BUT NOT IN DEATH MATCHES!

ANY QUESTIONS?!

YEAH. WHY DID YOU WRITE, "**MRS. TRINI SKULL-CRUSHER**" ON EVERY SINGLE PAGE?







OK.
WE HAD TO
DETOUR AFTER
BEING CHASED BY
MUTANTS, BUT
WE'RE FINALLY
HERE!

I NEED NEW
CLOTHES...

...AND NEW
SKIN.

I SEE
REGISTRATION!

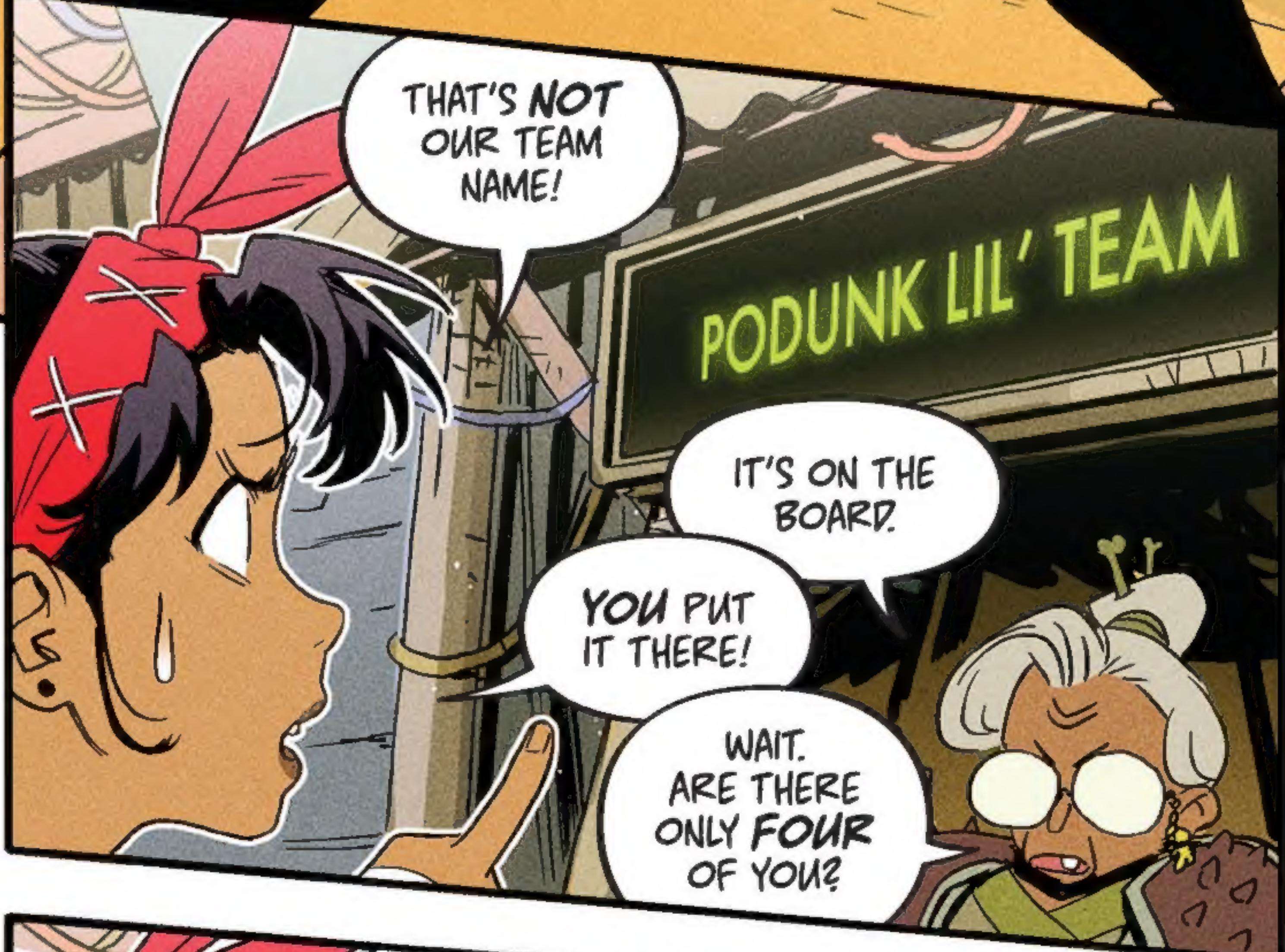
MARKET



HI. I'M
TRINI, TEAM
CAPTAIN. THE
NAME OF OUR
TEAM IS--

HOMETOWN?

UH, IT'S
JUST A PODUNK
LITTLE TOWN,
BUT--



THAT'S NOT
OUR TEAM
NAME!

PODUNK LIL' TEAM

IT'S ON THE
BOARD.

YOU PUT
IT THERE!

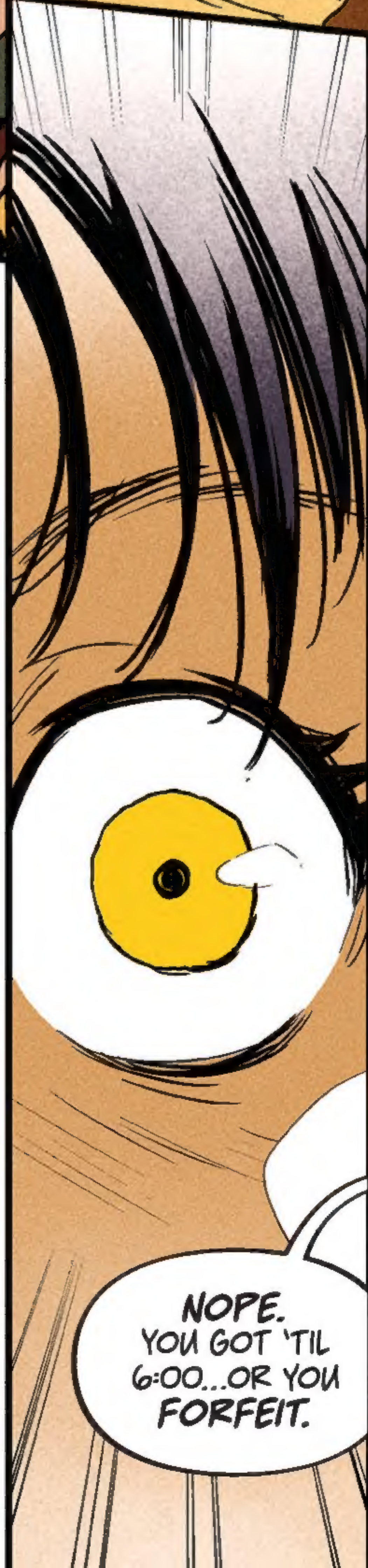
WAIT.
ARE THERE
ONLY **FOUR**
OF YOU?



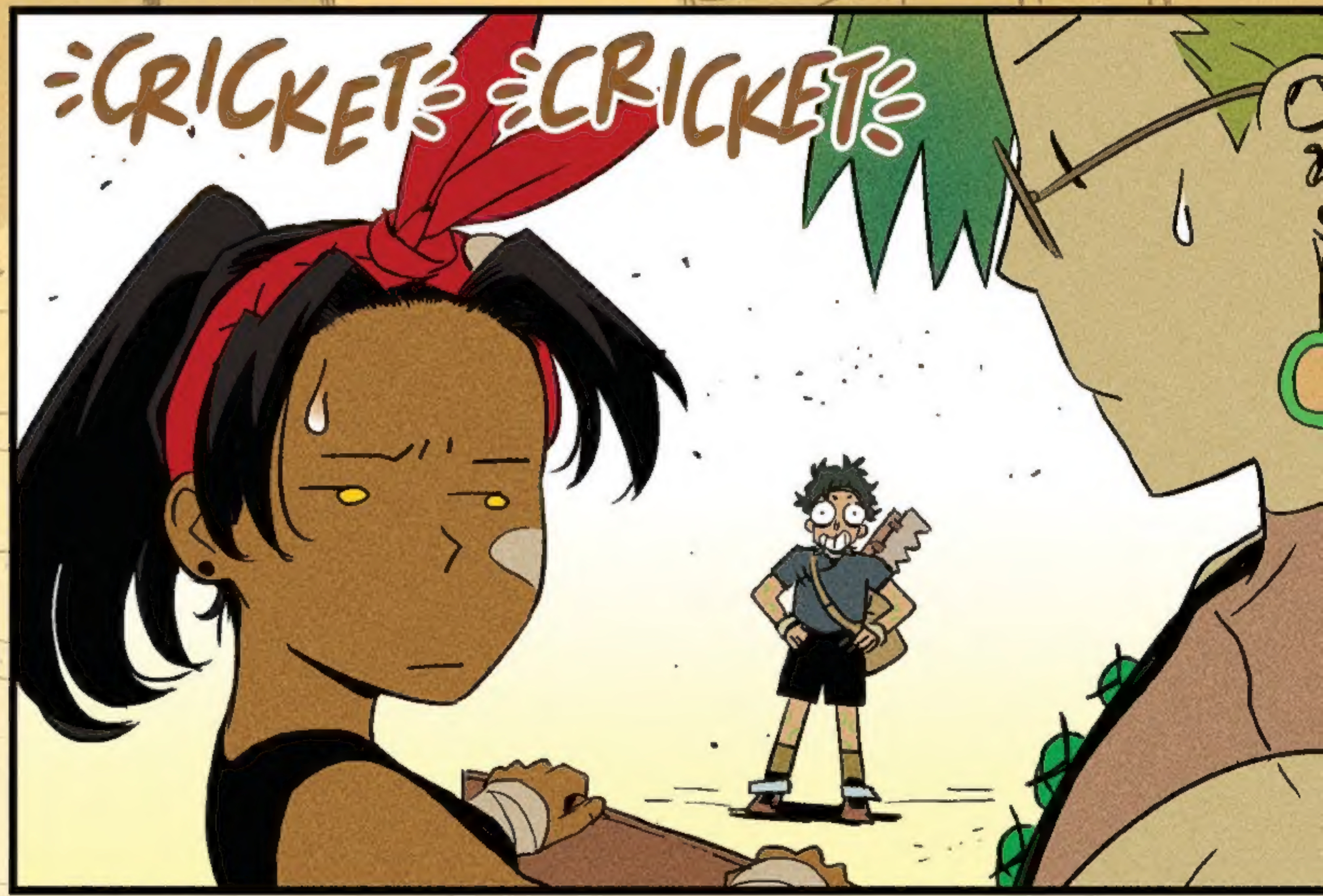
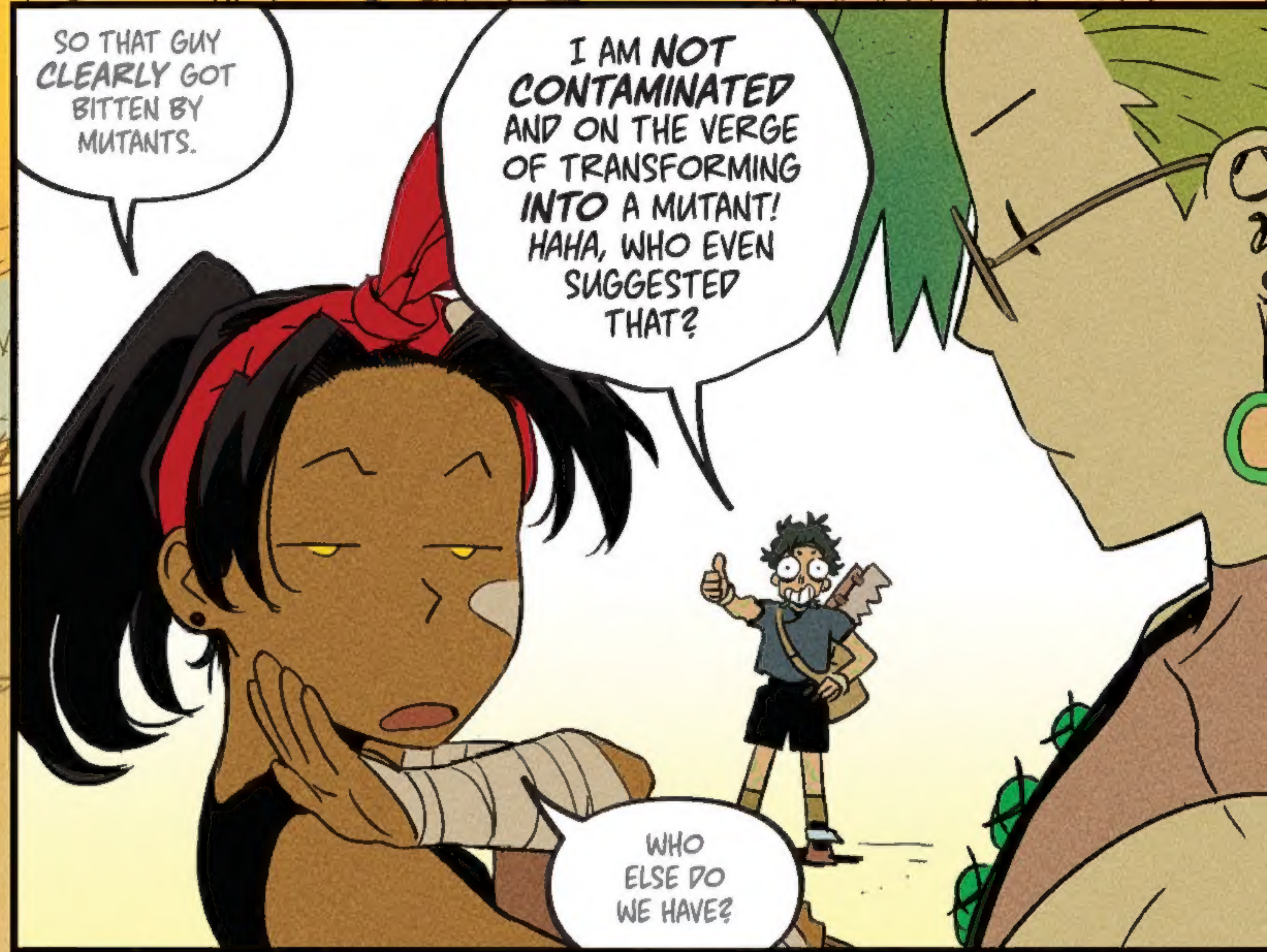
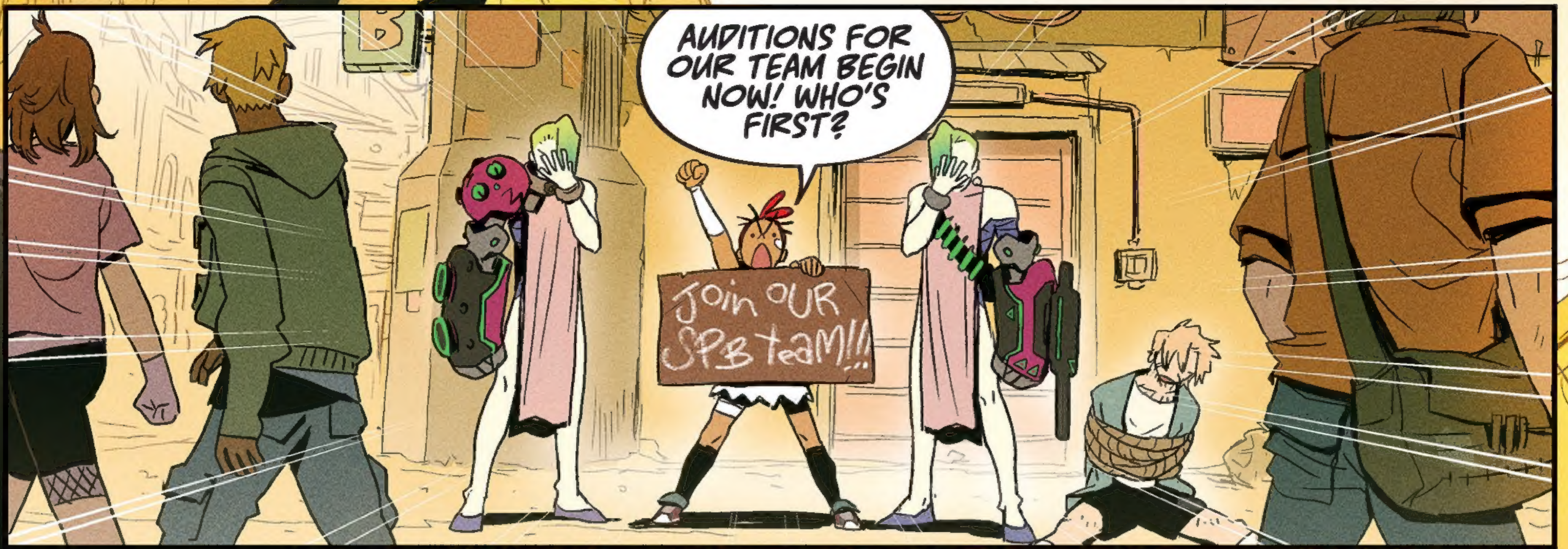
WHERE'D
WE GO?!

ONLY **FULL**
TEAMS QUALIFY.
COME BACK WHEN
YOU'VE GOT FIVE
PLAYERS.

WE **WILL**
HAVE FIVE PLAYERS! WE
JUST DON'T HAVE THEM YET.
CAN WE GET AN EXTENSION--



NOPE.
YOU GOT 'TIL
6:00...OR YOU
FORFEIT.





CUTTER DAN!

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S STILL AVAILABLE!

YOU GUYS SEE IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE FOR GOALIE.

I GOT THIS.

CUTTER DAN! MY NAME IS TRINI, AND I--

SORRY KID, BUT I'M NOT DOING AUTOGRAPHS TODAY.

THAT'S NOT--

I KNOW I'M THE BEST SCREAMING PAIN BALL PLAYER EVER. BUT THAT MEANS I'M TOO BUSY TO DEAL WITH FANS.

WHAT?! SKULL-CRUSHER IS THE BEST PLAYER.

SKULL-CRUSHER IS A HAS-BEEN. I'M THE REAL DEAL.

TWITCH TWITCH

FIRST OF ALL--

HEY!

VANISH



I'M
SORRY,
WHO ARE
YOU?

YOU WERE
LITERALLY
TALKING TO ME
A SECOND
AGO!

WELL,
I'M NOT DOING
AUTOGRAPHS
TODAY.



I THINK WE
GOT OFF ON THE
WRONG FOOT...
SOMEHOW.

I'M TRINI. I'M
PUTTING TOGETHER A
TEAM TO ENTER THE
TOURNAMENT.

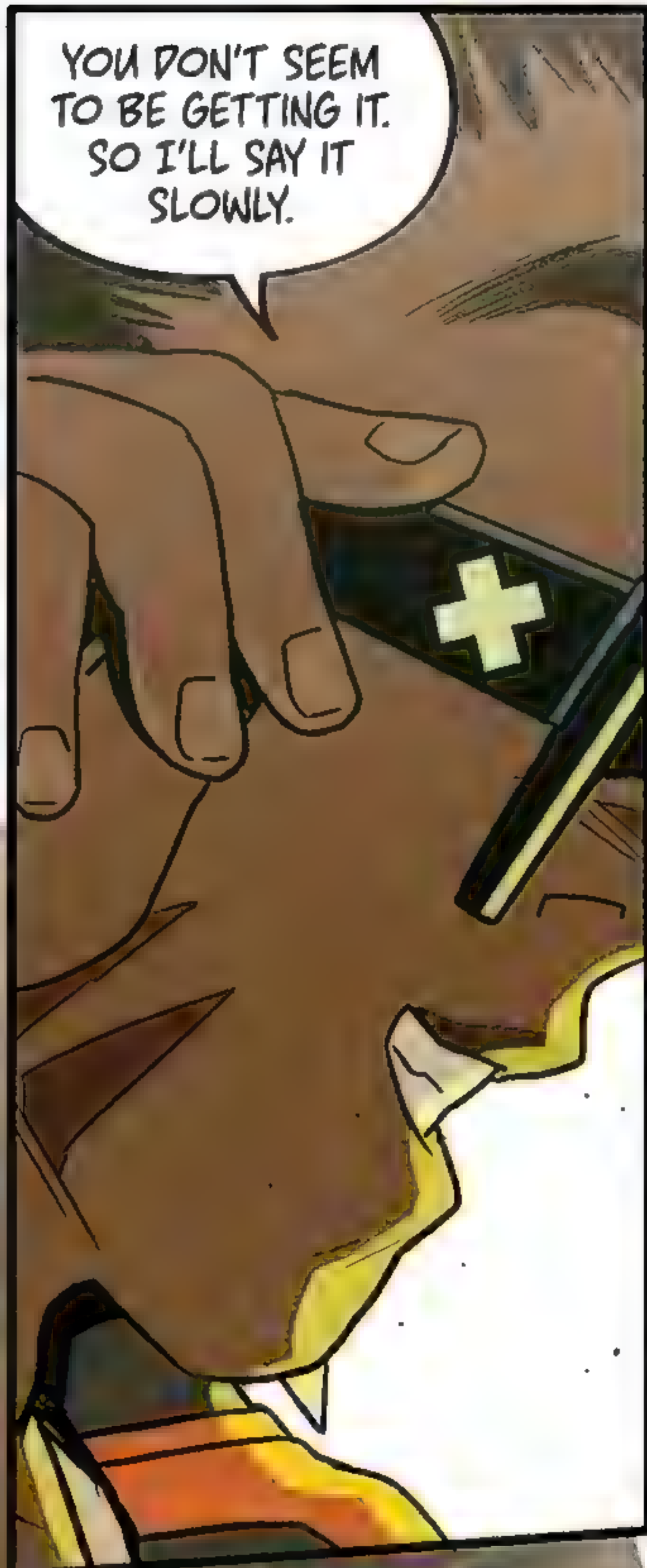
I NEED A
SECOND STRIKER.
YOU NEED A TEAM,
OR ELSE YOU'LL
NEVER MAKE
IT INTO THE
LEAGUE--



NO.

I HAVEN'T
GIVEN YOU THE
FULL PITCH...

...DISTANT
SECOND PLAYER
TO SKULL-CRUSHER.



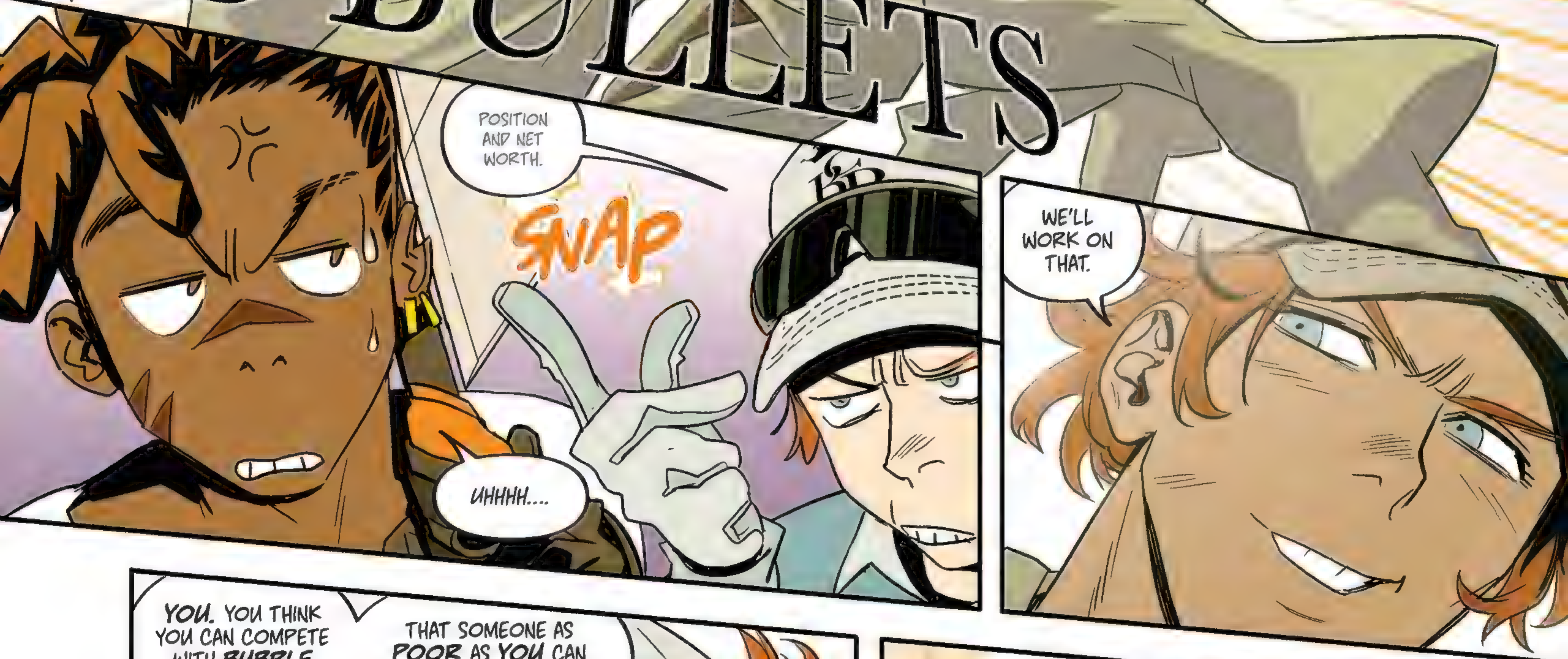
YOU DON'T SEEM
TO BE GETTING IT.
SO I'LL SAY IT
SLOWLY.



LEAVE ME
ALONE!

JOIN MY
TEAM!

BUZZ-OFF,
ROAD-KILL.





JUST GIVE UP. YOU CAN'T MATCH THEIR OFFER--

THE CUTTER 1.0!



THE INITIAL VERSION OF YOUR SIGNATURE MOVE. FIRST TIME YOU TRIED IT, IT TOOK PART OF YOUR EAR.

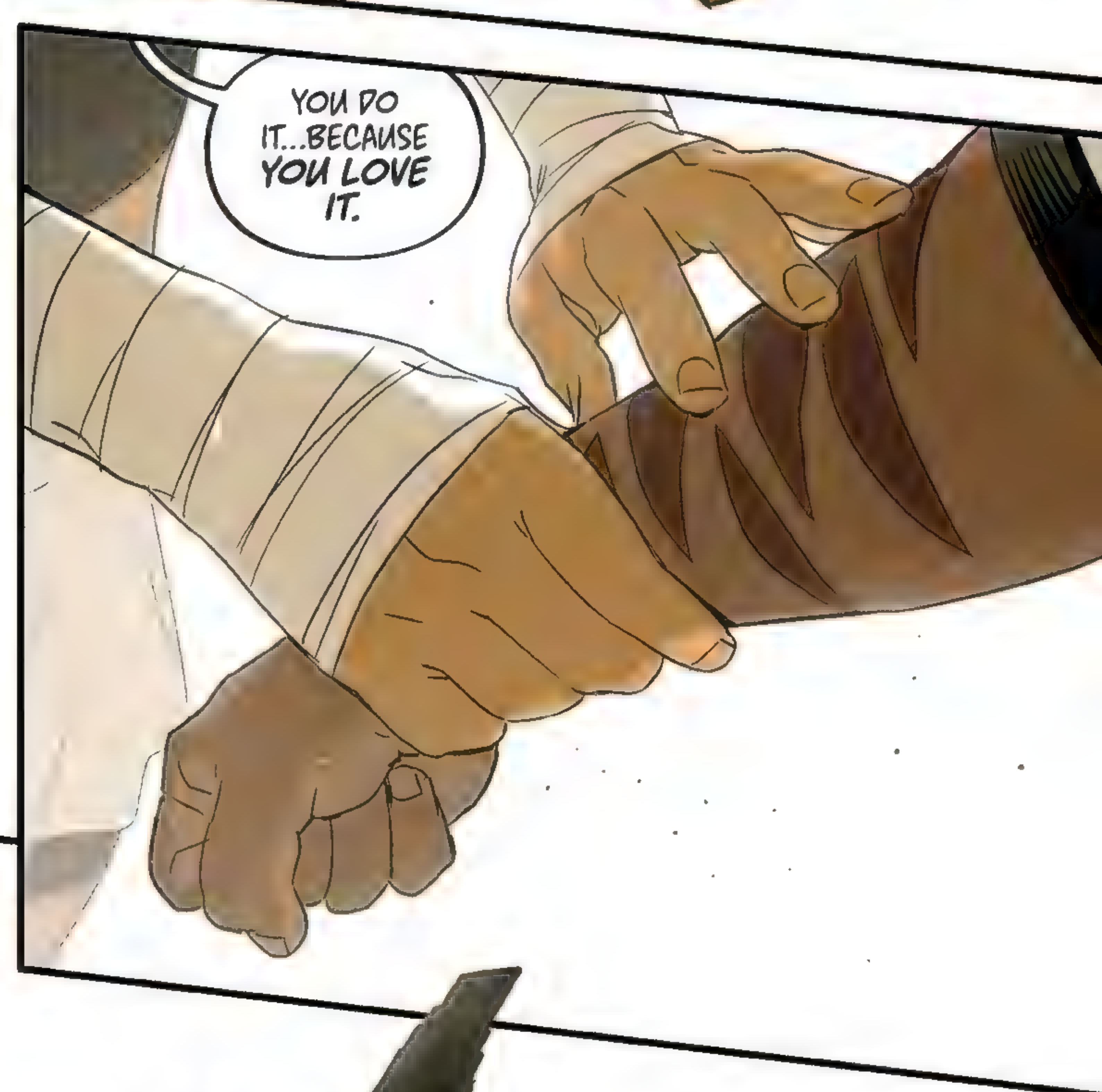
YOU WERE BOTTOM OF THE AMATEURS, BUT YOU WOULDN'T STOP.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH IT HURT. OR HOW MANY TIMES YOU GOT CUT.



OR THE LOSS OF ONE OF YOUR HANDS.

YOU DID IT EVERY SINGLE GAME, UNTIL YOU PERFECTED IT. THERE'S ONLY ONE REASON SOMEONE PUTS THEMSELVES THROUGH SO MUCH PAIN.

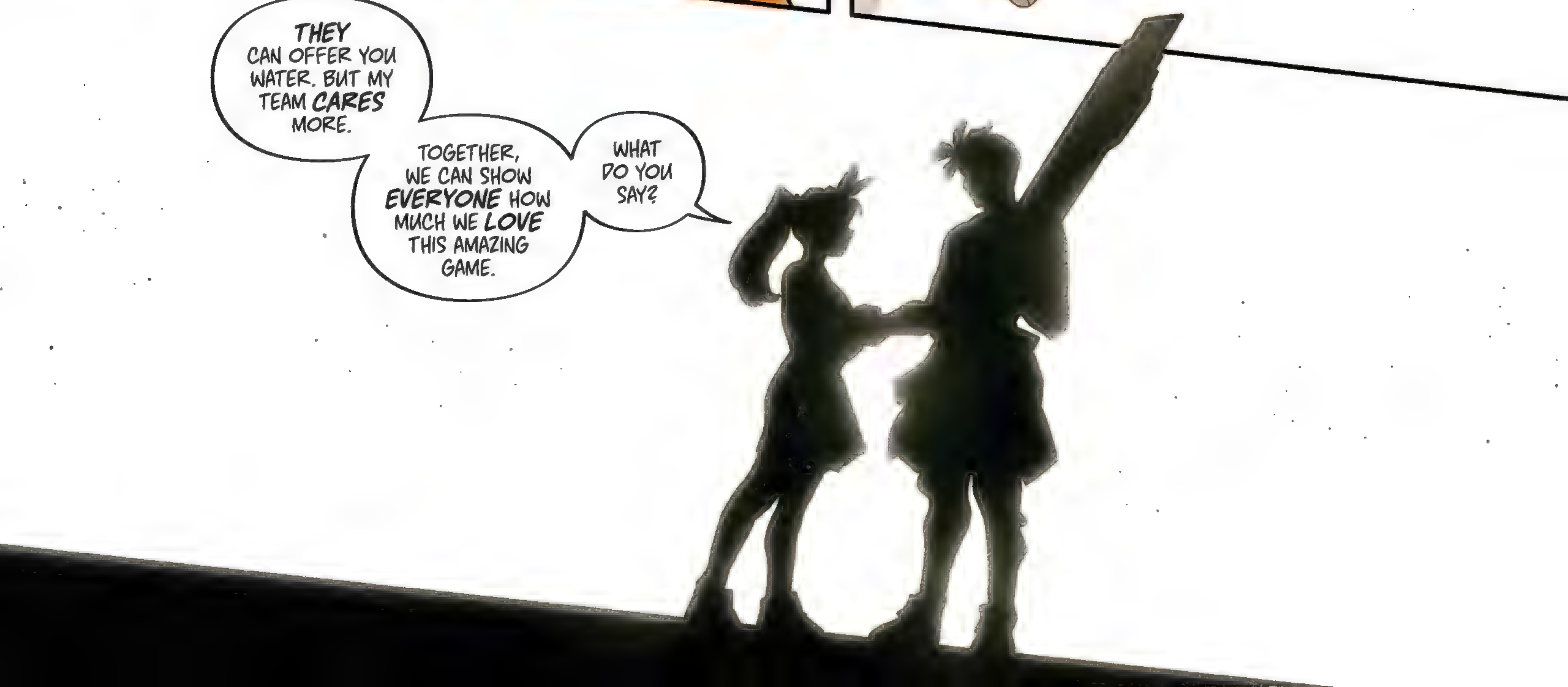


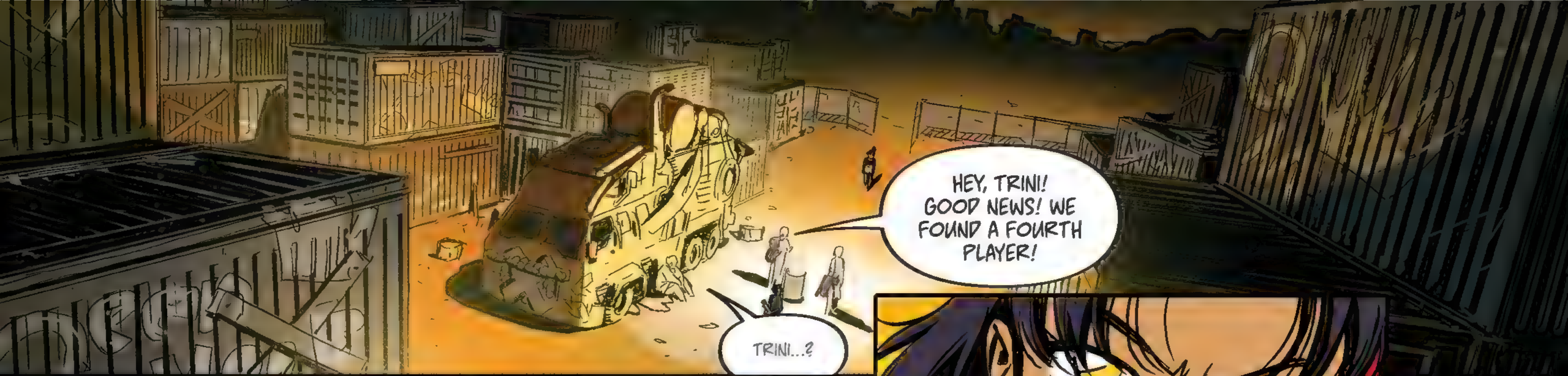
YOU DO IT... BECAUSE YOU LOVE IT.

THEY CAN OFFER YOU WATER. BUT MY TEAM CARES MORE.

TOGETHER, WE CAN SHOW EVERYONE HOW MUCH WE LOVE THIS AMAZING GAME.

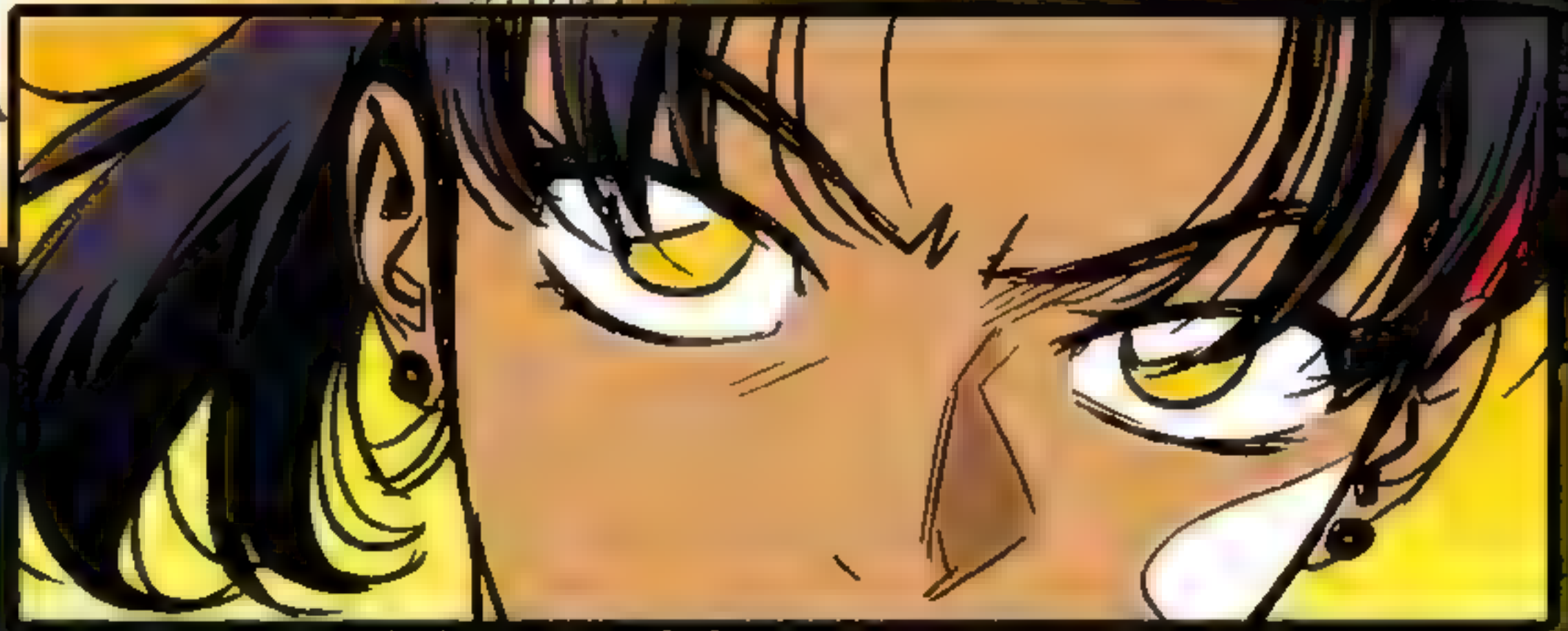
WHAT DO YOU SAY?





HEY, TRINI!
GOOD NEWS! WE
FOUND A FOURTH
PLAYER!

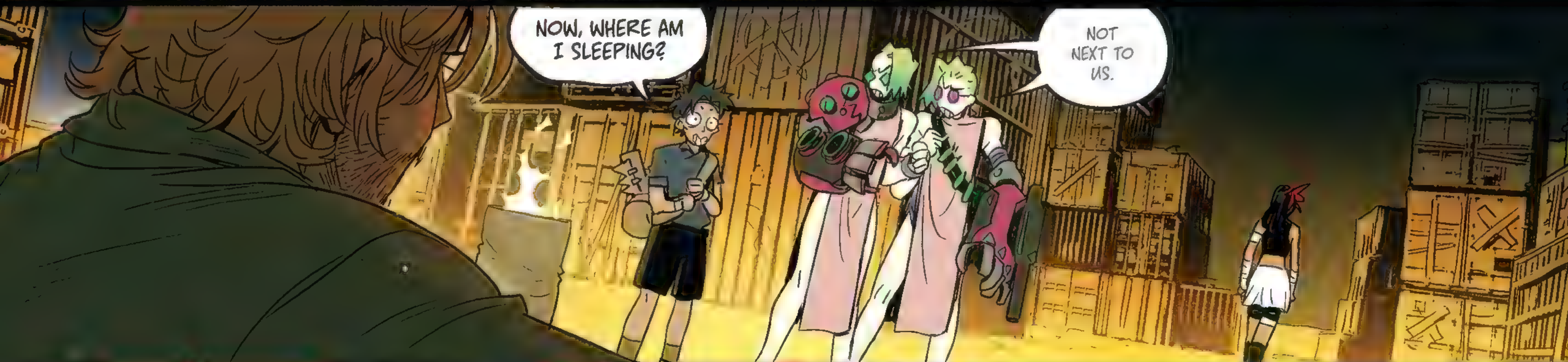
TRINI...?



TADA!

I'M SO GLAD
FOR THIS
OPPORTUNITY!

I HAVE TO
WARN YOU, I'M
NOT GOOD, BUT
THAT IS THE **ONLY**
THING WRONG
WITH ME!



NOW, WHERE AM
I SLEEPING?

NOT
NEXT TO
US.



"HOW MUCH WE LOVE THIS...?
ARE YOU KIDDING?"

YOU KNOW
NOTHING! I
DON'T LOVE
THIS GAME.

AND IF
YOU THINK
LOVE ALONE
WILL LET YOU
SURVIVE...

...YOU
SHOULD
DROP OUT
NOW.



MOM, DAD.
WE'RE HERE.
THERE'S SOME
BIG OBSTACLES
STILL...BUT
I'M SURE
I CAN...

I CAN...

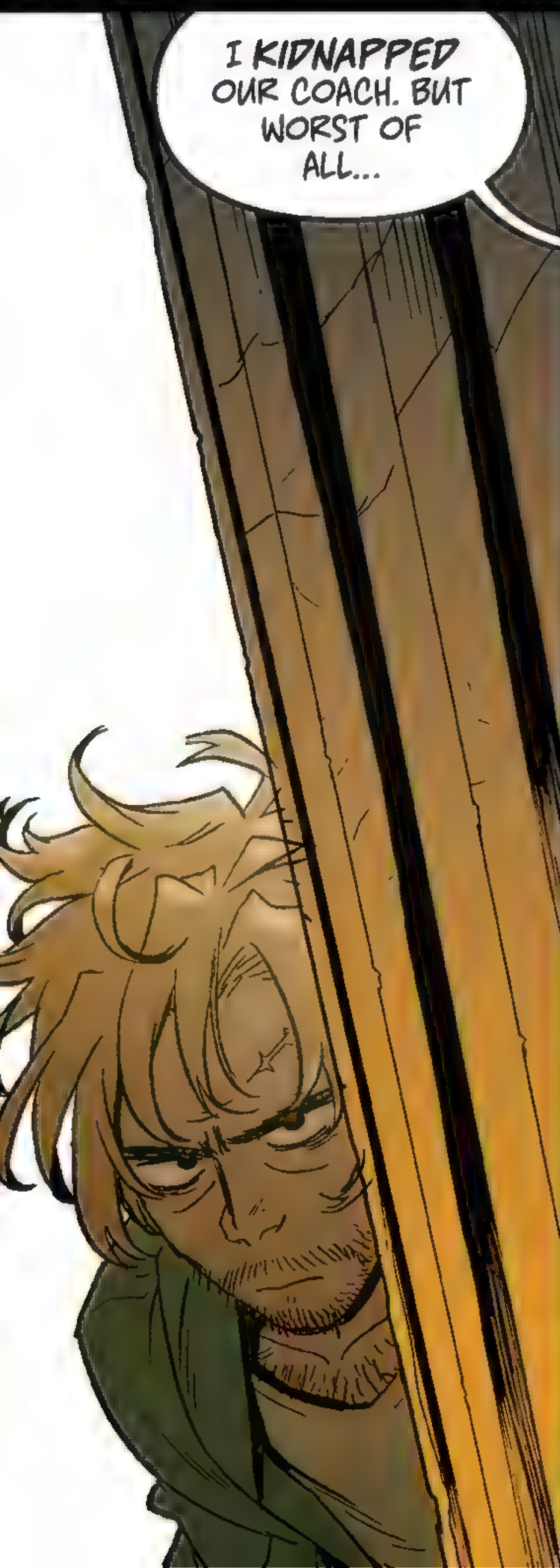


I CAN'T.
MOM, DAD...I'M
SELFISH.

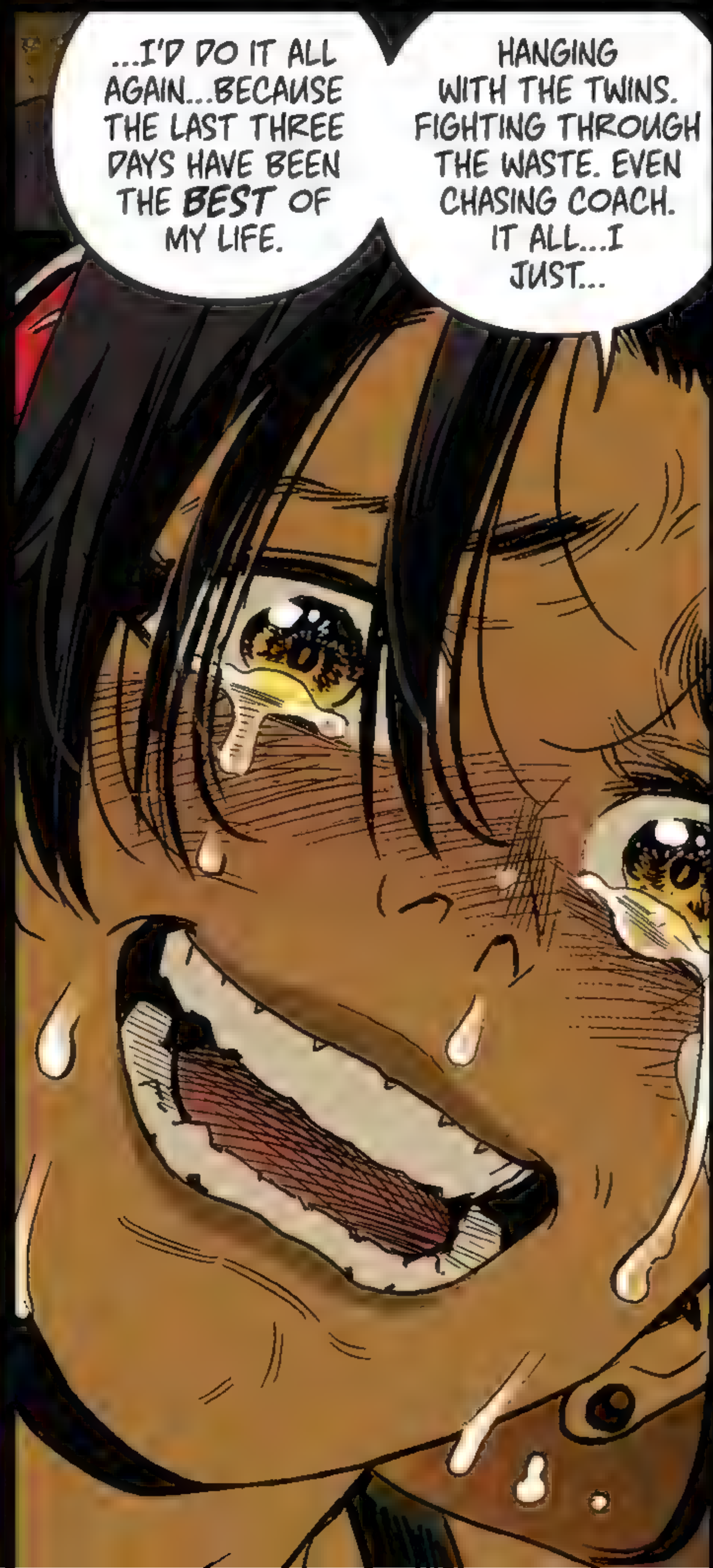


THIS IS MY
DREAM...BUT
WHAT DO I HAVE
TO **OFFER** TO
ANYONE
ELSE?

I'M THE
ONE WHO IS TAKING
EVERYTHING HERE.
I'M BRINGING TWO
BANDITS.



I **KIDNAPPED**
OUR COACH. BUT
WORST OF
ALL...

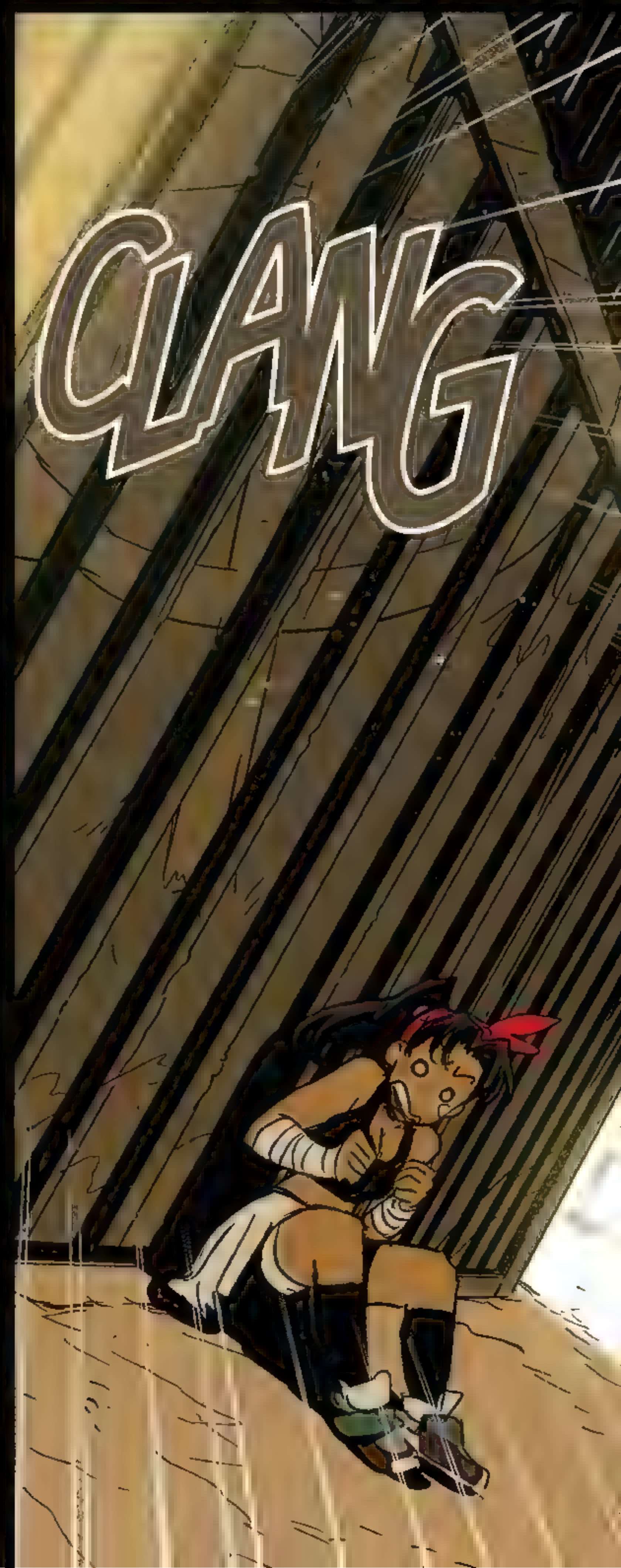


...I'D DO IT ALL
AGAIN...BECAUSE
THE LAST THREE
DAYS HAVE BEEN
THE **BEST** OF
MY LIFE.

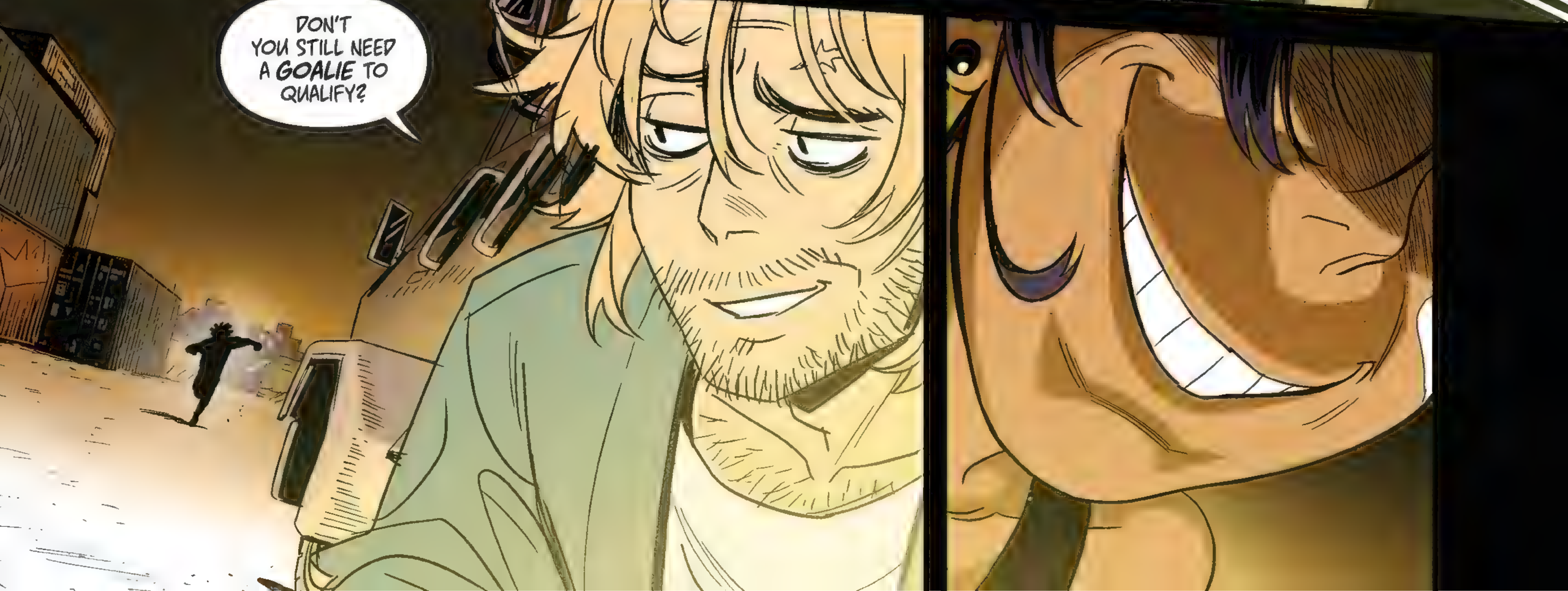
HANGING
WITH THE TWINS.
FIGHTING THROUGH
THE WASTE. EVEN
CHASING COACH.
IT ALL...I
JUST...



...IS THIS
WHAT HAVING
FRIENDS FEELS
LIKE?



CLANG





ABSOLUTLEY NOT!!!!

THIS WAS YOUR POSITION WHEN YOU PLAYED.

THIRTY YEARS AGO, YOU INSANE BABY!

EVERYONE! YOU KNOW THE PLAN.

...LET'S GO WIN.

WELCOME TO THE FIRST QUALIFYING MATCH FOR QUEEN MOB'S TOURNAMENT!

Whoa! ba! ba! ba!

DUE TO THE SHEER VOLUME, EACH MATCH WILL BE A SHORTENED, THIRTY-MINUTE DEATH MATCH.

WHEN THE TIMER GOES OFF, THE TEAM WITH THE MOST POINTS WINS.

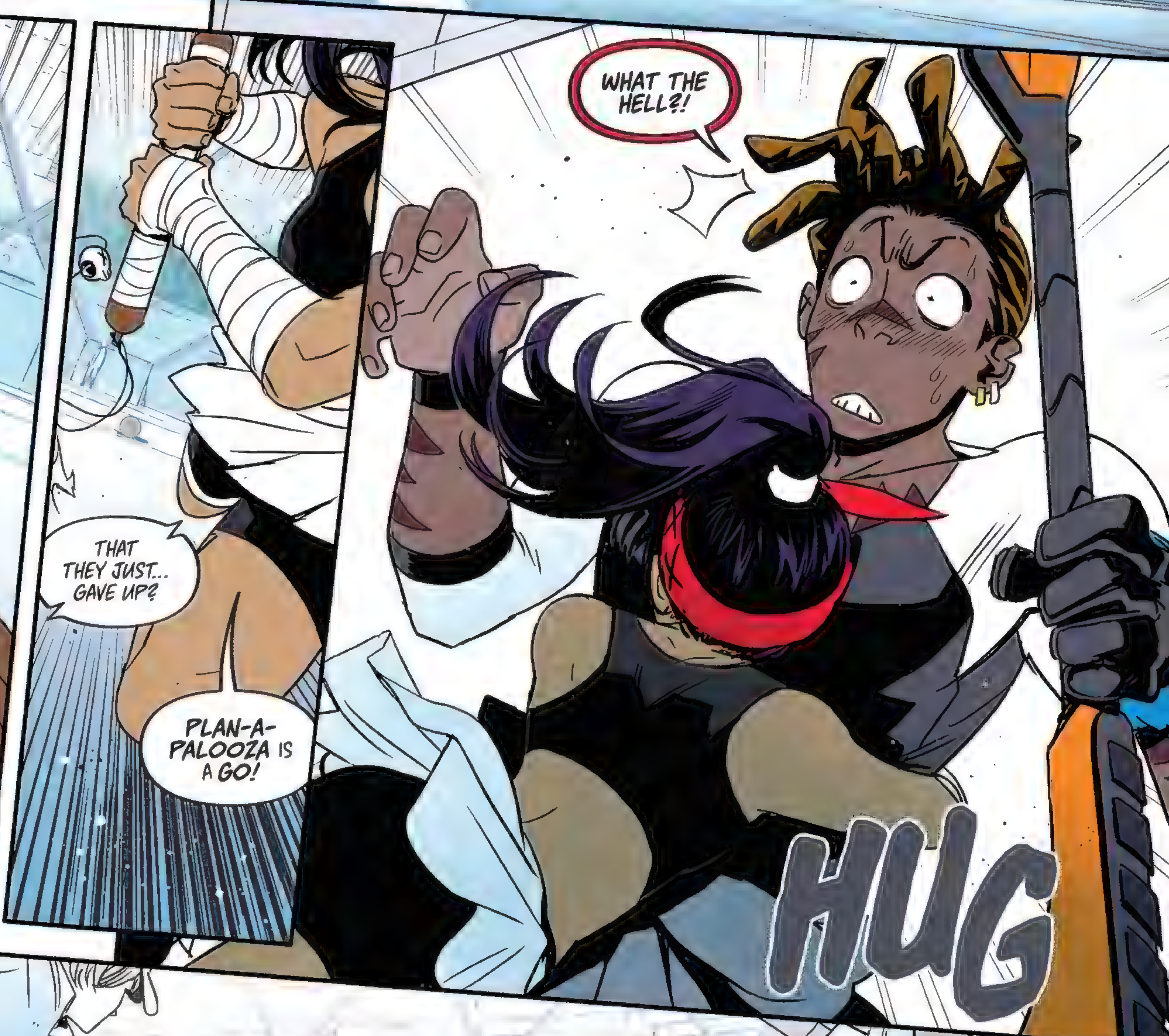
READY. SET...



FIGHT!



AND PODUNK LIL' TEAM GETS THE BALL FIRST! A HUGE ADVANTAGE...



WHAT THE HELL?!



THAT THEY JUST... GAVE UP?



PLAN-A-PALOOZA IS A GO!



THE PODUNK DEFENSE IS FIGHTING THE OTHER TEAM WHILE JUST...STANDING THERE.

I DON'T...DO THEY UNDERSTAND HOW THIS GAME IS PLAYED?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

IF YOU THINK I WON'T USE MY CUTTER MOVE ON YOU, YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ME!

THE CUTTER IS NOT YOUR MOVE...



...IT WAS YOUR BROTHER'S!



YOU WERE
RIGHT. THE LOVE OF
THE GAME IS **NOTHING**.
IT'S ABSTRACT.

WE DON'T
CARE ABOUT THE
GAME...



...WE CARE
ABOUT THE
PEOPLE
PLAYING IT.



YOU THINK
I'M DOING THIS FOR
MY **BROTHER**?

MAX WAS A GOOD
PLAYER. ONE OF
THE **BEST**.

THEN HE **FORGOT**
THIS WAS A **GAME**. THAT
EVERYONE IS OUT HERE FOR
THEMSELVES.

HE MADE A
STUPID MISTAKE
AND **DIED**.



I'M NOT
DOING THIS
BECAUSE OF MY
BROTHER...

...I'M
DOING THIS
TO **SURPASS**
HIM!





GO TEAM!
YOU'RE NOT
GETTING PAST
US...YOU...

YOUUUUUUU

GRAARRGGH!

AHHHH!

ROOOOOOAR!

PODUNK'S
SECOND STRIKER HAS
TRANSFORMED INTO A SUPER
MUTANT! AND HE'S RAPIDLY
PASSING THE INFECTION ON
TO THE OTHER
TEAM!



BECOMING
A MUTANT DOES NOT
MEAN THE PERSON IS DEAD. SO
NO POINTS FOR EITHER
TEAM.

RAAAAHAAH

AHHHHH!
THEY'RE TRYING
TO GET ME!

THEY'RE
TRYING TO
GET ALL OF
US, YOU
IDIOT!

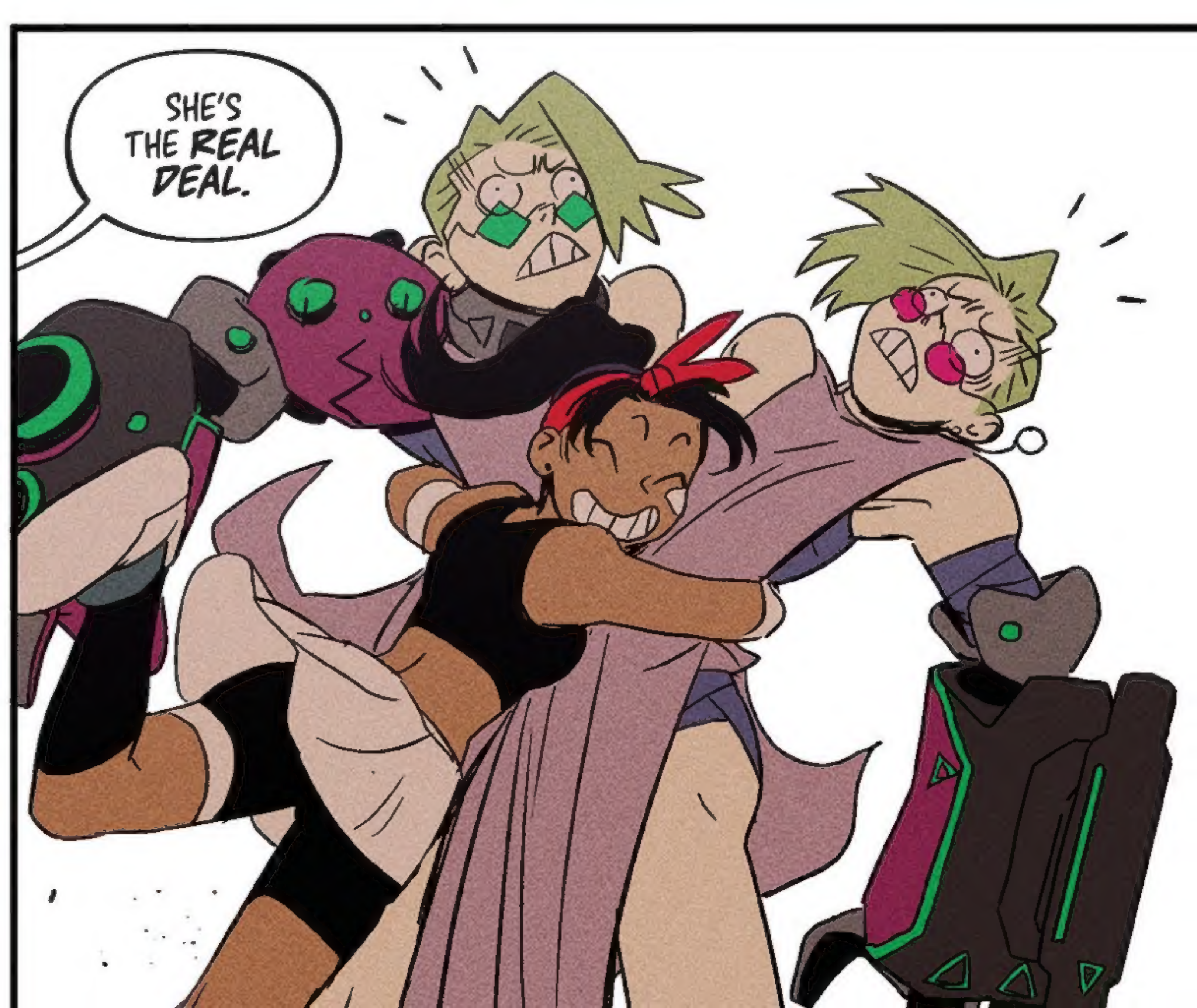
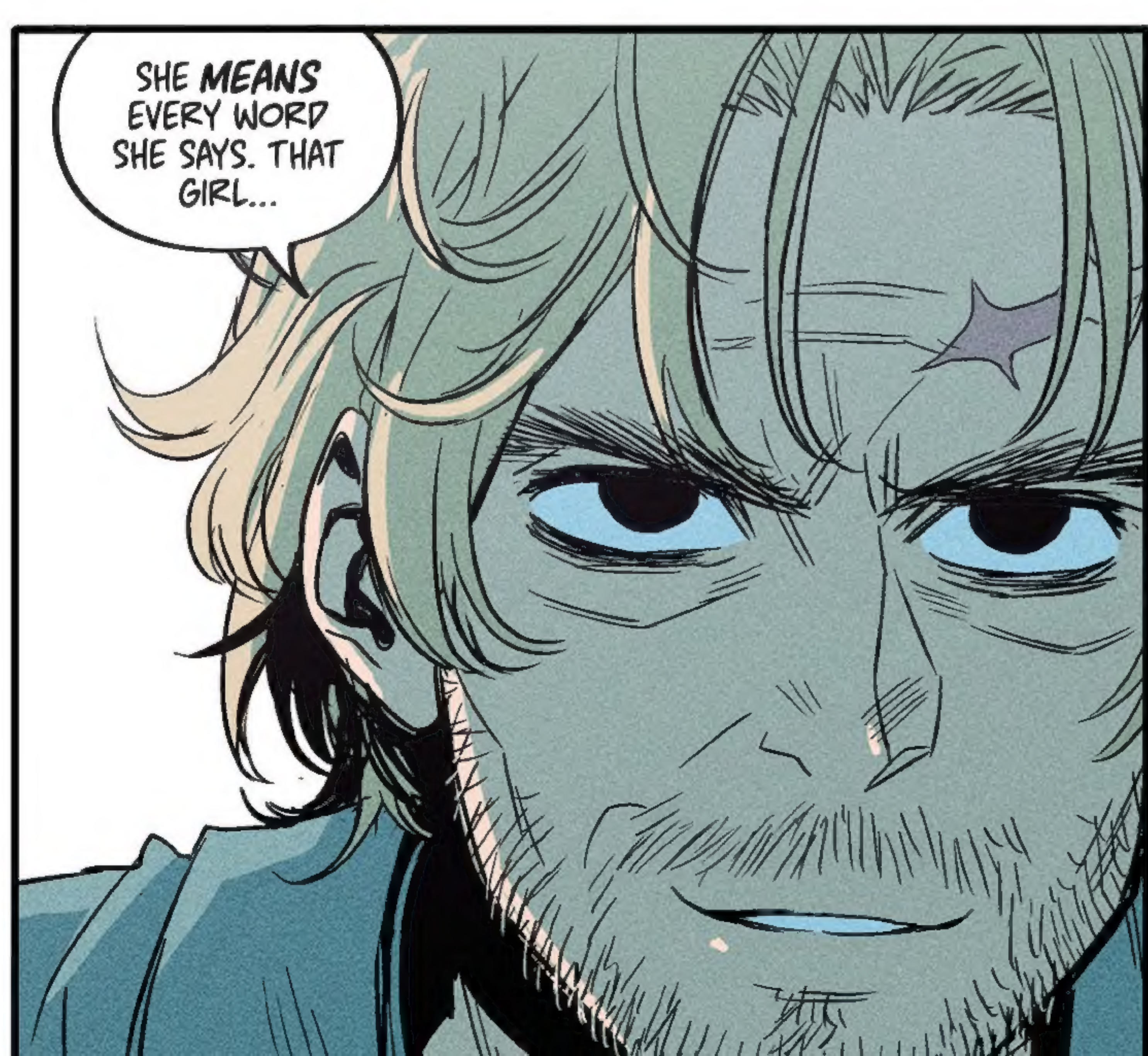
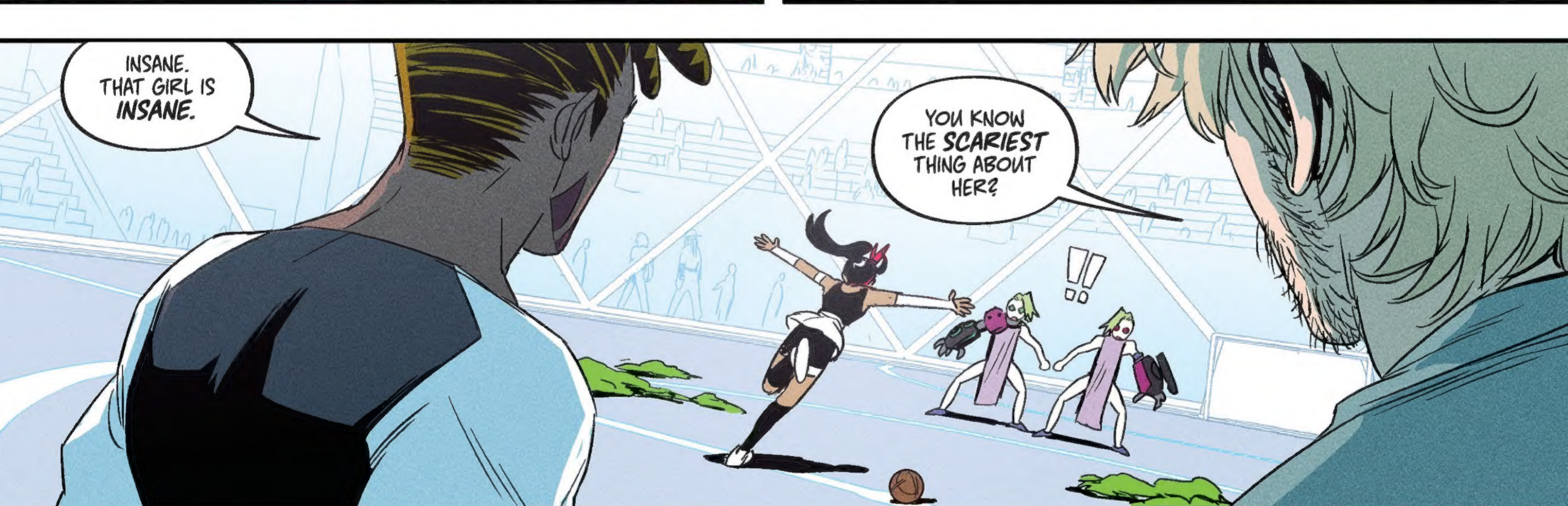
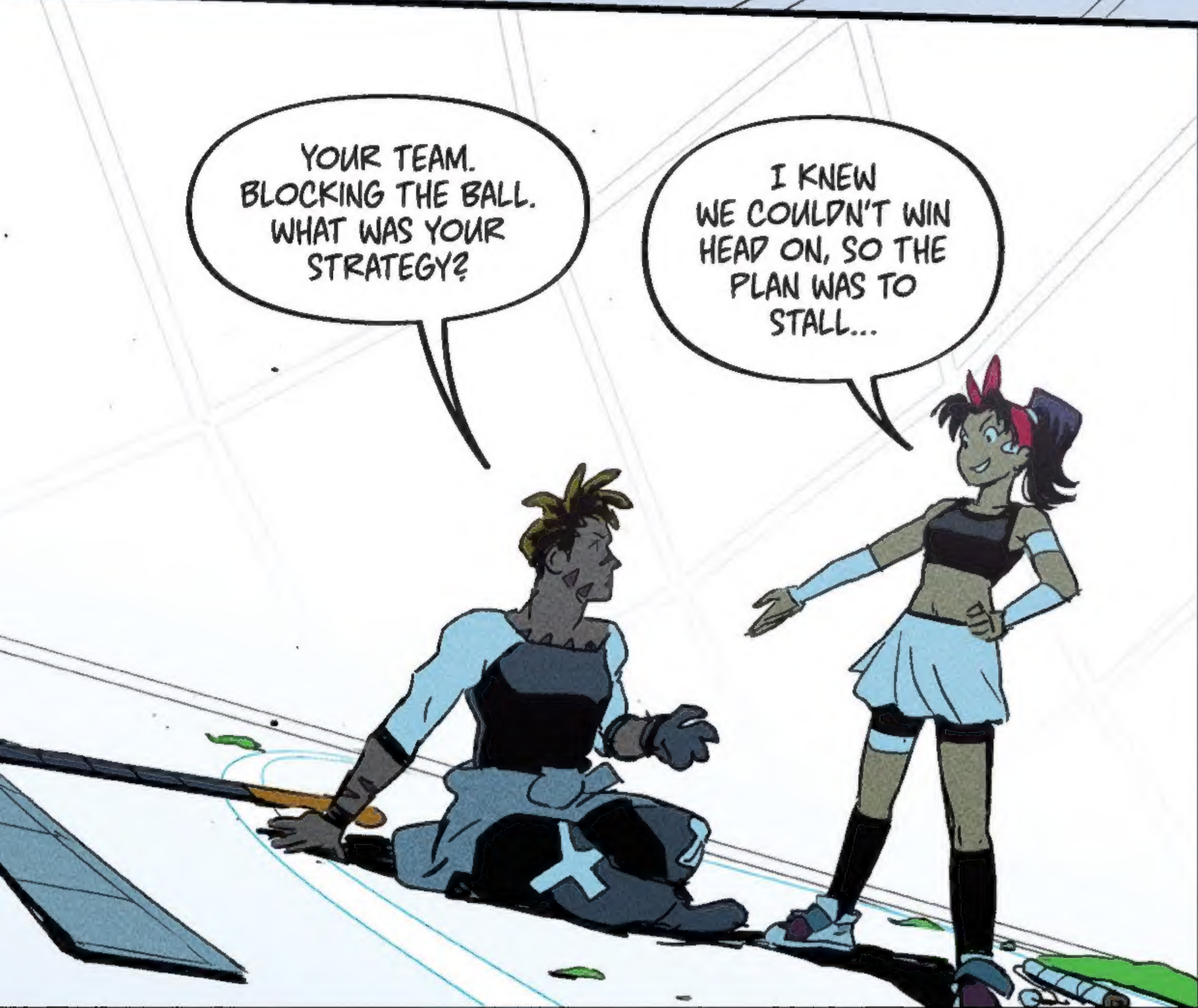
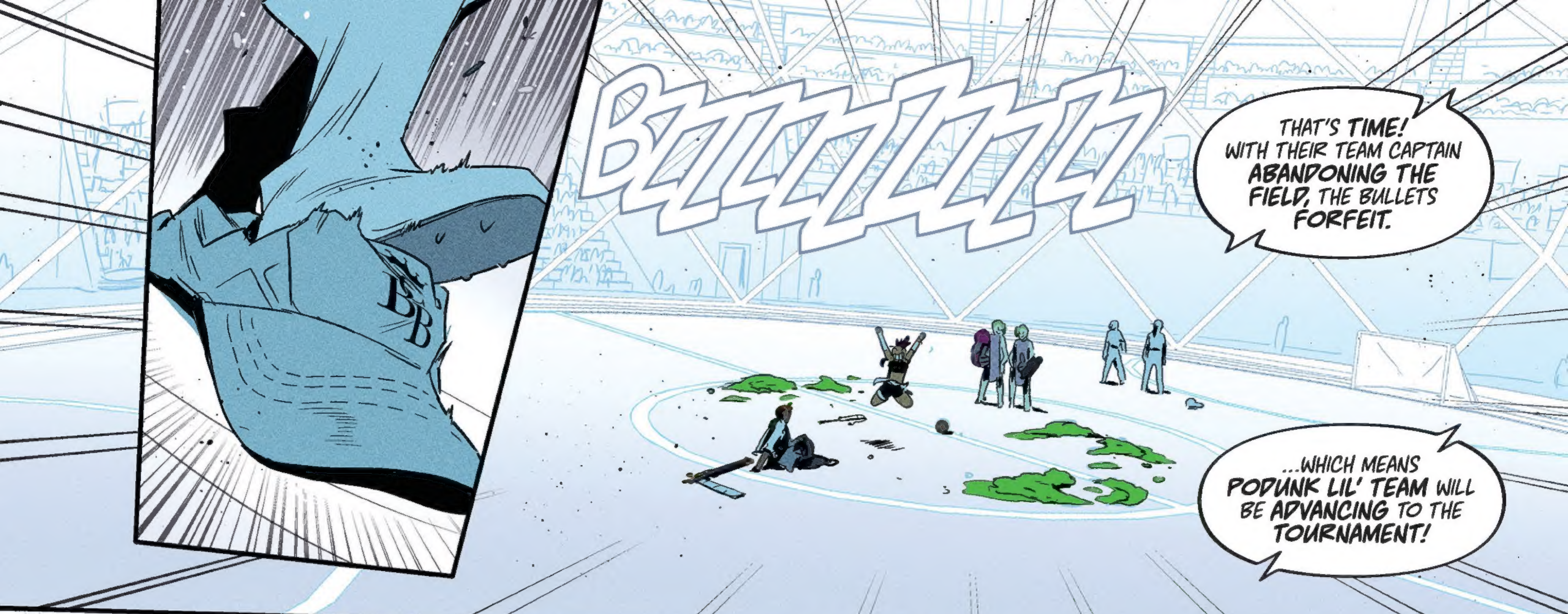
THEN
JUSTIFY
THE MONEY
I PAID
YOU...

...AND
TAKE ONE
FOR THE
TEAM!







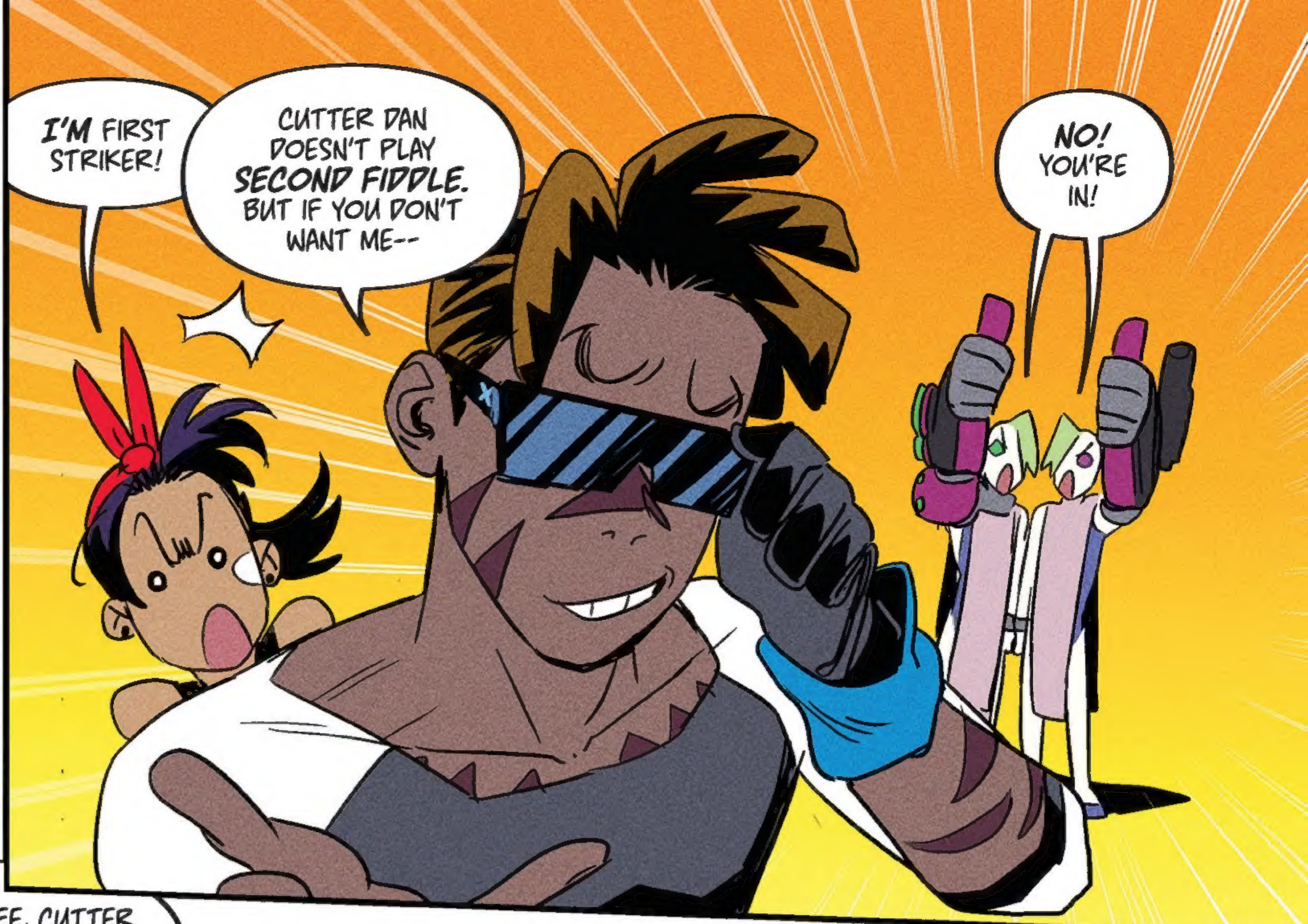




FINE.
I'LL DO YOU
A FAVOR, AND
JOIN YOUR
TEAM...

YES!

...AS FIRST
STRIKER.



I'M FIRST
STRIKER!

CUTTER DAN
DOESN'T PLAY
SECOND FIDDLE.
BUT IF YOU DON'T
WANT ME--

NO!
YOU'RE
IN!

ON THREE, CUTTER
DAN IS BETTER THAN
SKULL-CRUSHER!
ONE, TWO--



"CUTTER
DAN IS BETTER
THAN SKULL-
CRUSHER!"



GAHHHHH.

"ROADKILL.
YOU COST ME THE
TOURNAMENT."



YOU COST
ME EVERYTHING.
YOU BETTER HOPE
YOU DIE IN THE
ARENA...



...BECAUSE I'M
COMING FOR
YOU!

Trini moves on to the Tournament proper...but makes an ENEMY in the process!
Find out who ELSE will try to kill her in the next issue of **I HEART SKULL-CRUSHER!**

I HEART SKULL-CRUSHER! #3
ON SALE MAY 2024



RONID23